ALESSANDRO MALASPINA AND THE VOYAGE OF DISENCHANTMENT

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Abstract

Between 1775 and 1792 the shores of what is now Alaska and British Columbia were opened to European reconnaissance by a series of mostly Spanish expeditions. The most ambitious and prestigious of the Spanish expeditions was also one of the last; the Spanish hydrographic expedition of 1789-1794 – the *Viaje Politico-Cientifico Alrededor del Mundo*, created and commanded by Alessandro Malaspina. The Malaspina expedition was a technical tour-de-force that was meant both materially and symbolically to assert Spain's program of reform and modernization under the Bourbon monarchs, but Malaspina's liberal Enlightenment philosophy would in the end isolate him from the absolutist monarchy he served, dooming the results of the expedition to more than a century of obscurity and Malaspina to imprisonment and banishment. This thesis examines how European state cartography contributed to a competition for imperial space on the Northwest Coast and particularly how that space was shaped through the efforts of the Malaspina Expedition. A close examination of the Malaspina expedition and Malaspina's personal narrative opens a window on the distinctive Spanish imperialism of the late 18th century, and how the cartography of the region contributed to the territorial delineation of modern Alaska and British Columbia.

Table of Contents

Page

Page

Page

List of Figures

List of Figures

Page

List of Figures

Page

List of Figures

Page

Acknowledgements

I must begin this thesis by acknowledging the encouragement and support that received from both Dr. Carol Gold and Dr. William Schneider, when I first decided to return to academia in the autumn of 2009. I was very fortunate to meet Dr. Mary Ehrlander at a crucial time that same fall, and came to rely on the advice and direction of both Dr. Ehrlander and Dr. Gold throughout my course work in the department of Northern Studies. I was also fortunate to have Dr. Gold serve as chairperson for my graduate committee along with Dr. Ehrlander and Dr. Roger Pearson, a committee lineup that I feel honored by. My life has been touched and inspired by many personalities at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, including: Dr. Claus Naske, Dr. Gerald McBeath, Dr. Judith Kleinfeld, Dr. Terrence Cole, Karen Perdue and, of course, the remarkable Dirk Tordoff. Finally, I must thank my wife Cristiane Kaufmann, whose love and encouragement through the past 3 years made any of this possible.

INTRODUCTION

Figure 1. "The Victory of Spain" Giambattista Tiepolo 1762-1766, a ceiling fresco in the royal palace Madrid commissioned by King Charles III. Spain, the defiant female figure on the left gazes down on her dominion, the pillars of Hercules on her right and to her left a hooded church with cross holding a chalice. Source: The Yorck Project: *10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei.*

Late on the night of November 23, 1795 in the city of Madrid, a Spanish naval officer returned to his quarters after a social gathering typical for high ranking salon-society in the capital. A detachment of the Spanish Royal Guard waited surreptitiously outside, and after the officer entered his quarters, burst in behind him and placed him under arrest. The orders for the arrest of Commodore Alessandro Malaspina had originated a day earlier from El Escorial where the Spanish royal court was in temporary residence. Four

days after the arrest, on November 27, a State Council convened in El Escorial to adjudicate the case against Malaspina.[1] After a presentation of statements from first minister Godoy, and documentary evidence incriminating Malaspina in an effort to topple Godoy's position, the council began voting on Malaspina's fate. It became clear after only 5 votes that Malaspina held support among the council and might be acquitted, the secretary of the council, the Count of Montarco paused the vote to remind the council members that the orders for Malaspina's arrest was a direct expression of the King's position on Malaspina's activities. Montarco's caution had its desired affect and when voting resumed Malaspina's guilt was quickly and unanimously determined. [2] So ended the brilliant naval career of Alessandro Malaspina who 5 years earlier had sailed from Cadiz commanding the most ambitious State expedition yet conceived by Spain and whose leadership embodied Spain's greatest aspirations for enlightened reform.

In the aftermath of Malaspina's arrest and subsequent imprisonment, the material of the Malaspina expedition of 1789-1794 would be scattered, shelved and suppressed, with an important exception. Cartography produced by the expedition, some of it from the farthest reaches of the Empire, would appear in numerous iterations well into the 19th century. One excellent example of the maps produced by the Malaspina expedition is the 1791 map of Puerto de Mulgrave seen in figure 2.

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[1] Judgment by a royal state council would usually be reserved for sedition or high treason by a high ranking member of government, but an arrest like that of Alessandro Malaspina was not uncommon in this phase of king Charles IV's reign. Malaspina's arrest, and the events before and after are best recounted in: Dario Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*, ed. Trans., Don S Kirschner, and Teresa J Kirschner, *English* (Nanaimo: Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre, 2001), 86-88.

[2] Ibid., 87-88.

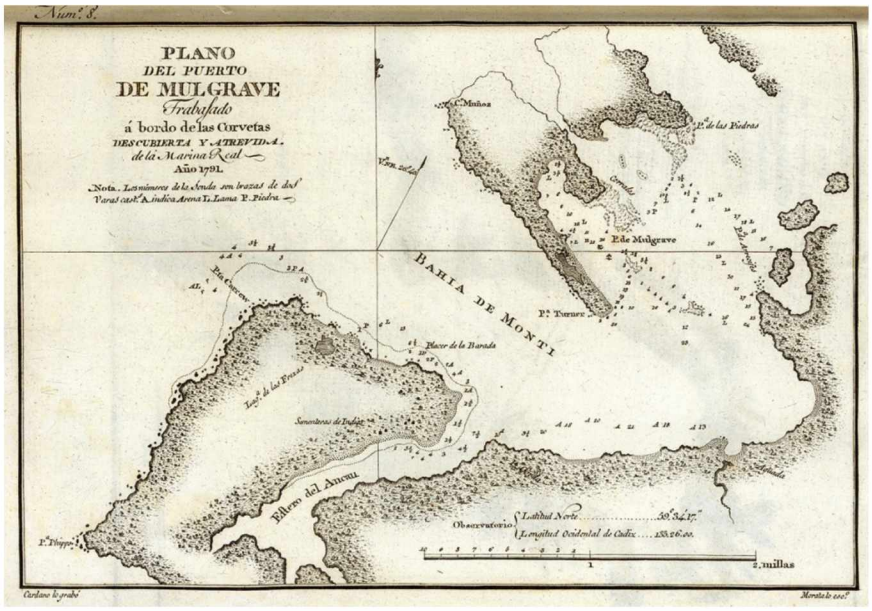

Figure 2. Puerto de Mulgrave, modern Yakutat, Alaska mapped by the Malaspina expedition in 1791. Source: David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

A comparison of the 1791 Puerto de Mulgrave map with a modern map in figure 3 is instructive. The place names that the Google Earth software application displays in this reproduction are in English (although it is possible to select any of more than 40 languages). Several place names stand out in the Google map: Monti Bay, Canoe Island and the community of Yakutat directly across from Port Mulgrave. The geographic features generally match between the two maps, but in the intervening 221 years many of the Spanish place names in the 1791 map have been replaced. When Malaspina arrived at Puerto Mulgrave in the summer of 1791 the area in these two maps was (in the view of the Spanish crown) part of *Nueva Espana*-New Spain, and consistent with the Spanish

political imaginary of the period, not colonies, not insular possessions, but the realm of Spain itself: *Espana ultramarinha*.[3]

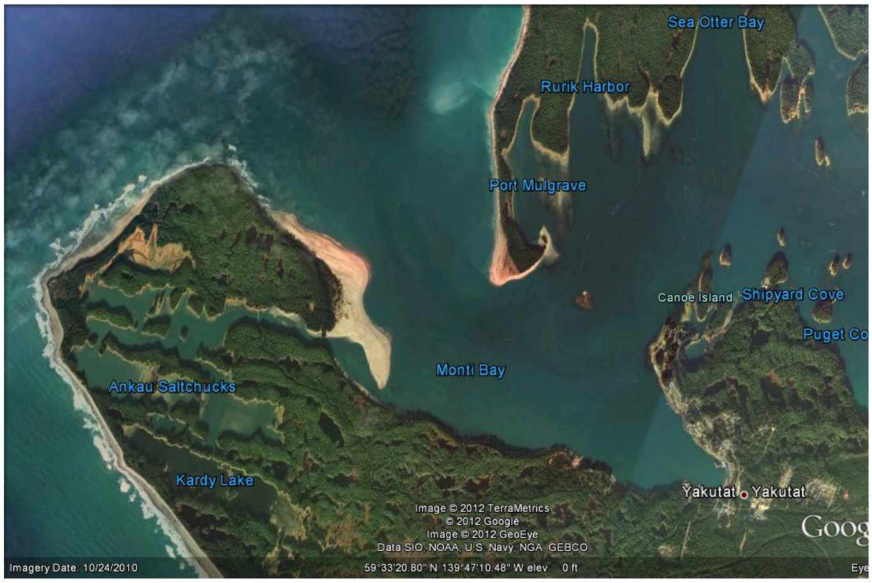

Figure 3. Yakutat, satellite mapping delivered through Google earth software application in March 2012. Source: Google Earth, accessed March 10, 2012

Alaska and Western Canada's history in the period of first European contact is often presented within the framework of the Russian "discoveries" of the mid 18th century and the subsequent Russian advance geographically eastward with the inception of the quasi-state enterprise called Russian-America, but Russian progress in North America was not achieved in a vacuum, nor was it particularly organized or rapid.[4] Even

[3] *Espana ultramarinha* translates literally to "overseas Spain", the political philosophy of Spain towards its ultramarine dominion is well explored in: Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

[4] J. R. Gibson, "A Notable Absence: The Lateness and Lameness of Russian Discovery and Exploration in the North Pacific, 1639-1803," in *From Maps to Metaphors: The Pacific World of George Vancouver*, ed. Robin Fischer and Hugh Johnston (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993), 353.

after the Russian Imperial Ukase of 1799 (reiterated in the Ukase of 1823) Russian claims to the Northwest coast of America were never a foregone conclusion.[5] By far the two most aggressive and active European powers in the region before 1799 were England and Spain, two monarchies with long maritime competitions who went to war with each other five times in the 18th century. Today's maps of Canada and Alaska reflect the struggle between Spain and England between 1776 and 1793, a struggle that came within a hair's breadth of combat and was settled no less dramatically in the diplomatic chambers of London, Madrid, Paris and Nootka on the Northwest Coast of America.[6] It can be argued that all that followed in this region on behalf of Russia and finally the United States was preceded by and a product of the affair now known as the Nootka Crisis that brought the ultimate resolution of the counter-claims of Spain and England to a territory reaching from the Monterey Bay to the Bering Sea.

The unabashed imperialism of European powers in the last half to the 18th century as the final blank spots in the world's maps were being filled is unremarkable. The

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[5] The Emperor Paul I of Russia issued a decree or Ukase in 1799 expressing Russia's claim to all of the Pacific coast of America south to 51 degrees latitude north, the decree was made while Russia was part of a triple-alliance (that included England) in conflict with Napoleonic France. Spain since 1796 was an ally of France. The 1799 Ukase overlapped Spanish claims, but it was also a Russian internal state document that was never communicated to foreign powers. The Russian Imperial Ukase of 1823 reasserted the claims of 1799 but by then the United States had inherited the post-Nootka Spanish claims through the Adams-Onis treaty of 1819. See Irby C. Nichols, "Anglo-American Relations the Russian Ukase : Reassessment," *Pacific Historical Review* 41, no. 4 (1972): 444-459; Warren Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 514-522; "Treaty of Amity, Settlement, and Limits Between the United States of America and His Catholic Majesty. 1819", n.d., http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/sp1819.asp.

[6] Nootka was the Europeanized name for a sheltered bay on the west coast of what is now Vancouver Island that became Bourbon Spain's farthest north outpost in the Americas during the 18th century.

Spanish and English claims to the Northwest Coast (and in Spain's view the entire Pacific coast of the American land mass) reached back more than 200 years.[7] However, for the efforts, conflicts and political resolutions of great European empires to be played out in what was the most remote corner (from the centers of European power) of the world is remarkable, and more so when it is recognized the that these events served as the foundation for all of territorial delineations we now witness in the region.[8]

In broadest terms this thesis concerns Spain and its ambitions, successes and failures within the context of the events of 1791 on the Northwest Coast of North America. However, the intention is also to reveal a greater degree of detail and nuance for the events of this period through examining the history of the Spanish hydrographic expedition of 1789-1794 – the *Viaje Politico-Cientifico Alrededor del Mundo* - and the motivations of the creator and commander of that expedition, Alessandro Malaspina. Malaspina is a personality whose story was nearly lost to us. A Tuscan by birth when much of what is now Italy was a possession of Spain, Malaspina is one of the best examples of a rationalist enlightenment thinker in the era of the Spanish Bourbon reforms. His loyalty to the absolutist monarchy he served was unimpeachable, yet for the courage of his liberal philosophy and reformist convictions (with perhaps a touch of naiveté) Malaspina would in the end spend eight years of his life in a Spanish prison,

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[7] A discussion and chronology of both Spain's and England's claims to the Northwest Coast is presented in Chapter 1, 12-15.

[8] The northwest coast of America was more than 16,000 sailing miles from England or Spain via the Cape Horn route and more than 20,000 miles via the Cape Hope route, the English colony of Botany Bay in modern Australia was slightly closer.

bitter reward after successfully commanding the greatest scientific expedition ever conceived and executed by Spain to that point. Why Alessandro Malaspina would bring his expedition, the symbolic embodiment of Spain's resurgence and aspirations for the future, to the waters of the Northwest Coast (which was not part of the original sailing plan) is a question that will be answered in this thesis and in doing so better illuminate what is arguably the most important episode in the history of the region before the U.S. purchase of Alaska in 1867.

The official title of the Malaspina Expedition *Viaje político-científico alrededor del mundo-the scientific – a political-scientific voyage around the world* provides insight into the nature of what Anthony Pagden calls "the Spanish political imagination" as well as Malaspina's comfortable role (perhaps too comfortable) as both naval officer and intellectual elite.[9] The equal billing of the scientific and political is unique among Spanish state expeditions up to this period and carries broad implications.[10] The brief proposal for the voyage made its purpose even clearer; in the first three paragraphs the author identified the "noble competition" between England, France and Spain in the "natural sciences," but that the two other equally weighted objectives were the "making of hydrographic charts" and finally the investigation of the political status of America in

[9] Malaspina's critical thinking while at the same time in the service of the Spanish crown was dangerous but not by any means an isolated case; Pagden presents many examples of dissent within the Spanish hierarchy during the early modern era. Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*.

[10] J. Pimentel, "Ciencia y política en el pensamiento colonial de Alejandro Malaspina (1754-1794)" (Universidad Complutense, Facultad de Geograf"\ia e Historia, 1994): 155 .

relation to Spain and to other European nations.[11] Eighteenth century European concepts of science are a distant relation (through undeniably related) to modern science, but it is fair to say that "Hydrography," or marine mapping in the service of the monarchy was, for an elite like Alessandro Malaspina, almost certainly a political if not military activity.[12] From the outset there was never anything remotely innocent about the intentions of the Malaspina Expedition; clearly the expedition was designed to further the political interests of the Spanish Empire, and any ambiguities on that point seem to rest solely in the commander's internal dialogues.

The study of cartographic history has experienced significant upheavals in the past 50 years, notably culminating in a series of texts by celebrated cartographic historian J. B. Harley in the second half of the 20th century and continuing through the work of Pickles, Wood, Woodward and others.[13] One general trend has been to extend

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[11] *Capitane de Fragata* Don Jose Bustamante y Guerra was equal in rank to Malaspina and proposed as co-commander of the voyage but the proposal manuscript is signed by only Malaspina, the translator's preface to the Hakluyt version notes that the style of the proposal is Malaspina's. Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001): 313-314.

[12] A useful examination of the role and place of science in the late 18th century can be found in: Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

[13] A good overview of the critical cartography arguments and proponents can be found in: J.W. Crampton and John Krygier, "An introduction to critical cartography," *ACME: An international e-journal for critical geographies* 4, no. 1 (2005): 11–33 . John Pickles, *A History of Spaces. Cartographic Reason, Mapping and the Geo-Coded World.* (London: Routledge, 2004). Denis Wood, *The Power of Maps* (New York: Guilford, 1992). David Woodward, "Origin and history of the history of cartography.," in *Plantejaments I Objectius D'una Historia Universal De La Cartografia / Approaches and Challenges in a Worldwide History of Cartography.*, ed. David Woodward, Catherine D. Smith, and Cordell Yee (Barcelona: Institut Cartografic de Catalunya, 2001), 23-29.

deconstructionist arguments to the history of cartography, so that maps are recognized as primarily social documents and generally artifacts of political strategies that, in the case of the Americas, often reflect a Eurocentric approach to the creation and control of knowledge. Traditional historiographic interpretations that identified a trend in cartography from art to science through the late Renaissance to the modern period have been rejected by Harley and others. [14]

The *disenchantment* of cartography -- the process of correcting speculative maps created, for example, by such famous entities as the Delisle family in Paris in the 18th century -- through projects such as the English Cook Expedition, the French LePerouse Expedition (figure 4) and the Spanish Malaspina Expedition have likewise been discounted.[15] The inaccuracies or outright fabrications published in the DeLisle maps of the north Pacific region served an agenda with willful intent no less than did English

[14] Harley submits that cartography was/is a form of political discourse whose chief purpose is the acquisition and maintenance of power structures, see: J. B. Harley, "Silences and secrecy: The hidden agenda of cartography in early modern Europe," *Imago Mundi* 40, no. 1 (1988): 57-76, Matthew Edney, "John Mitchell's Map of North America (1755): A Study of the Use and Publication of Official Maps in Eighteenth-Century Britain," *Imago Mundi* 60, no. 1 (January 2008): 63-85.

[15] Michael J. Blakemore and J.B. Harley, "Concepts in the history of cartography: a review and perspective," *Cartographica* 17, no. 4 (1980): 17-23, 60-68. Matthew Edney, "Cartography Without Progress," *Cartographica* 30, no. 2-3 (1993): 54-68. Matthew Edney, "Reconsidering Enlightenment Geography and Map Making: Reconaissance, Mapping, Archive," in *Geography and Enlightenment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 165-169.

maps of the Northwest Coast that, while geodetically more accurate, had carefully omitted the names and locations of Tlingit, Haida or Salish communities.[16]

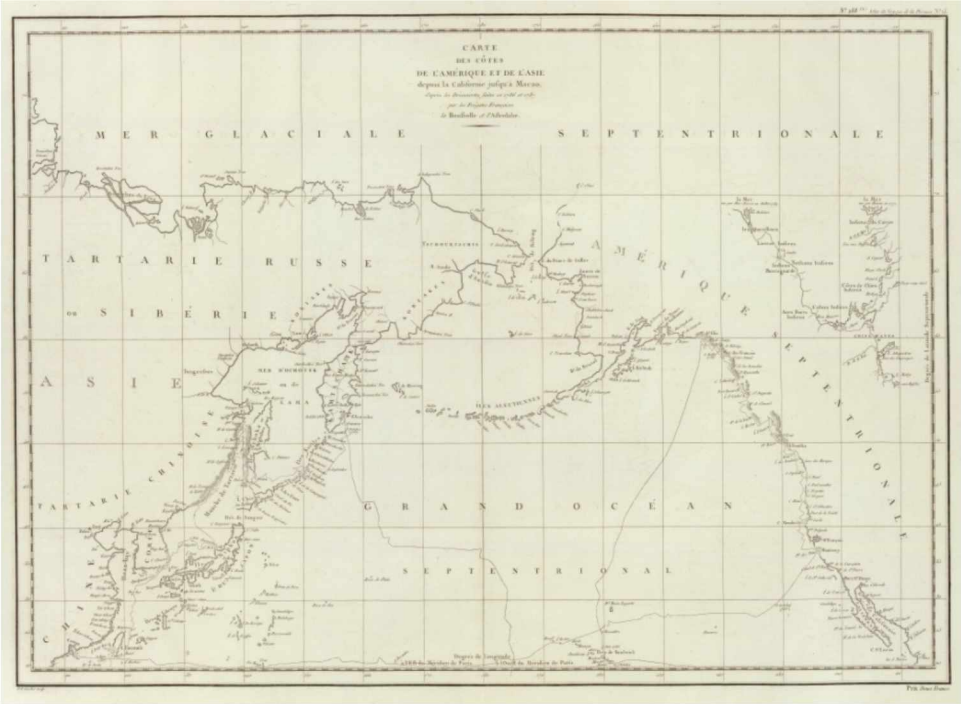

Figure 4. Carte des Côtes des L' Amérique, LePerouse expedition in 1787. Source: David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

This thesis will rejoin some of this discussion and will identify inadequacies in some of the critical-cartography arguments with reference to the Spanish practices of the period examined. It is no coincidence that three of the most celebrated enlightenment-scientific expeditions, Cook in 1778, Le Perouse in 1789 and Malaspina in 1790 would

[16] The difficulty in reconciling many of the current critical cartography theories with the complicated multicultural and multi-national history of the Northwest Coast in the late 18th century is addressed in a 2009 thesis by Devon Drury examining the activities of the English and Spanish engaged in mapping what is now Vancouver Island and its surrounding waters. Devon Drury, "That Immense and Dangerous Sea': Spanish Imperial Policy and Power During the Exploration of the Salish Sea, 1790-1791.," (University of Victoria, 2010).

all visit the coast of what is now Alaska. Documentary evidence clearly reveals Spanish self-confidence in its claims to all of the Pacific coast of America through the arcane donations of Tordesillas, the claims of Balboa and the activities of the naval division of San Blas, Nuevo Espana after 1774. For their part, the Kingdom of England (and for that matter France) ignored Spanish claims, and activities on behalf of quasi-private English commercial concerns (originating primarily from English India and Canton, China) proceeded virtually unchecked in the Pacific Northwest.

In the 18th century the northwest coast of America represented a unique and tempting combination of characteristics: unresolved territorial claims along vast sweeps of geography hitherto unseen and unmapped by Europeans. The attraction would prove irresistible. It was a region of profound mystery. Before Cook's third expedition it was still not widely known whether Asia and America were connected by land.[17] Each of the three great 18th century European expeditions to the Northwest Coast: Cook, LePerouse and Malaspina, were equipped and charged with mapping unknown regions, and an additional element that set them apart from all previous expeditions of their kind was the newly perfected ability to measure longitude at sea through the largely English invention of the marine chronometer. [18] All three expeditions also were aware of the possibility for

[17] Russian information on the nature of what is now known as the Bering Strait separating Asia from America was not available to most of Europe except in the form of the truncated and illicit map works of the DeLisle house in Paris. L. Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific," *Imago Mundi* 3, no. 1 (1939): 87-99.

[18] The Galilean method for determining longitude that required a high-powered shore based telescope observatory had been known and used by Cassini and others for at least a century before the Harrison chronometer. Cook, LePerouse and Malaspina all would use the Galilean method (usually for regulating

discovering a northwest passage and the search for such a passage was the subtext in a greater or lesser degree for the English and French expeditions.[19] There was also a linear relationship between the three closely spaced expeditions. LePerouse was aware and in possession of the accounts and maps of Cook and the early Spanish expeditions of the naval division of San Blas. Malaspina was aware and in possession of the accounts and maps of both Cook and LePerouse. Without in any way discounting the achievements of the Spanish, the argument that the Spanish Malaspina Expedition was in reaction to the earlier English and French efforts is supported, at least in part by the very words of Malaspina's original proposal.[20]

The incorporation of enlightenment principles of observation and reason were hallmarks of the Cook, LePerouse and Malaspina expeditions (scientific research, including physics experiments were most prominent in the malaspina expedition, figure

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their chronometers) when circumstances permitted. The chronometer was one of two methods for determining longitude at sea that was pioneered by the English, the second method, used specially developed astronomical tables to calculate position based on the angular distance between the moon and certain stars. A discussion of the development and deployment of these methods is found in Chapter 4.

[19] All three expeditions are documented to have considered the possibility of discovering a "northwest passage" even though all three also knew of Samuel Hearn who in 1771, while in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company, had traveled overland to the Arctic Ocean without encountering any such passage, information which if properly interpreted eliminated any possibility of a "northwest passage" south of 68 degrees latitude.

[20] Warren Cook describes the Malaspina Expedition in this context, while more recent historians working from more complete documentation point out that the Malaspina expedition exceeded both the English and French (including Vancouver) in planning, scope and execution. Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest : 306-320*. Donald Cutter, "Introduction," in *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, The Journal of the Voyage of Alejandro Malaspina, Volume 1*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2004), xxix-lxxvii.

5).[21] Yet perhaps the greatest insights to be revealed by an examination of any one of these three expeditions are the political philosophies of the great European powers during a brief window of time when empires spiraled in directions that the participants could scarcely have imagined in the prelude or believed in the aftermath.

Figure 5. Malaspina conducting gravity experiments. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

In 1788 when Alessandro Malaspina submitted the proposal for his political-scientific expedition around the world, Spain under Bourbon King Charles III was enjoying a significant resurgence in prestige and power. The family-pact alliance between France and Spain ensured a deterrent against English aggression, particularly after England's bitter loss of the American colonies, a defeat to which both France and Spain contributed. Disaster for Spain was, however, just over the horizon in the form of events

[21] However, more than one author has pointed out, Cook or Malaspina were never so enlightened that they did not flog men for disciplinary infractions. T. Karnes, "Alejandro Malaspina and the Perils of Projection," *viu.ca* (victoria, n.d.).

in France that were in motion even as Alessandro Malaspina was supervising the preparations for his expedition. The maelstrom of the French Revolution, the diminution of the French monarchy (and of course their ultimate liquidation) and the effect these events had on the family-compact alliance with Spain would set the stage for the Nootka Crisis, and the resolution of the Nootka Crisis was directly related to the diversion of the Malaspina expedition to the Northwest Coast in 1791.

The research for this thesis revealed significant disagreement regarding Spain's efforts and motivations to explore and chart the Northwest Coast. Between 1774 and 1792 Spanish ships and sailors explored the Northwest Coast in seven separate expeditions. Spain's motivation for this protracted campaign (the longest of its kind in Spanish naval history) has been alternately described as latent, reactive or at the least ill advised.[22] Historians, particularly English speaking ones, have at times demonstrated difficulty in portraying the Spanish efforts on the Northwest Coast without falling into stereotypical portrayals of colonial Spanish avarice, excess or shortsightedness.[23] This thesis will argue that before the collapse of the French-Spanish family compact, Spain conducted its activities on the north coast with consistency and prudence which could

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[22] Haycox's textbook condensed version of the Spanish experience is not an untypical treatment. Stephen Haycox, *Alaska, an American Colony* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002),67-80.

[23] The first publication of a reconstituted Malaspina journal of the expedition by Novo y Colson in the late 19th century was at least in part inspired by the bellicose comments of an English historian denigrating Spanish navigation expertise and accomplishments. There is some (perhaps much) benefit in reviewing "The Black Legend in England" which makes a case for the English and Dutch propaganda efforts against Spain reaching back to the era of Tudor England. William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1971).

only be described as reactive within the context of a long and ancient rivalry with England that was based on nothing less than a cultural jealousy and commercial vendetta.[24] It will also be submitted that the Malaspina Expedition sought, and particularly in the *Maldonado Relatión* episode, succeeded in refining cartographic knowledge and *disenchanting* previous cartographic representations that were measurably less accurate (for reasons mechanical or otherwise).[25]

The primary sources for this thesis are found in the excellent *The Malaspina Expedition, 1789-1794: the Journal of the Voyage by Alejandro Malaspina,* edited by Andrew David, Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, Carlos Novi and Glyndwr Williams, published by the Hakluyt Society in association with the Museo Naval in Madrid 2004.[26] The travail of the original Malaspina expedition journals is a story which in itself deserves a thesis treatment. The original uncompleted and unpublished eight volume report was suppressed by the Spanish crown following Malaspina's arrest and subsequent

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[24] Spain's disintegration in the prelude to and during the Peninsular War was long, complicated and thorough, with dizzying changes of allegiance alternately with and against Napoleonic France. Understandably Spain's ultramarine realm was neglected as the metropolitan center fought for its very survival. 1795, the year of Malaspina's arrest, while Spain was at war with France is not an inappropriate starting date for marking the decline of the Empire, although Napoleon's elevation to first Consul in 1800 when Spain was again an ally is often marked as a turning point in Spanish history.

[25] It is important to recognize that Malaspina himself was, in written record, well aware of the shortcomings in theory and practices of the cartographic project and described himself in oppositional terms to what he recognized as political elements in the cartography of the metropolitan Spanish state.

[26] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*; Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: Hakluyt Soc., 2003); Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume III*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: Hakluyt Soc., 2004).

imprisonment in 1796 and was not to see the light-of-day again until publication of the truncated version by Novo y Colson in the late 19th century.[27] Maps generated by the Malaspina survey were released and employed much earlier, but with references to Malaspina often expunged in almost 20th century Stalinist fashion. Of course great confusion reigned during the Napoleonic accession of Spain and peninsular war, with many maps that were obviously of Spanish and Malaspina origin subsequently appearing as French copies. The modern Hakluyt three volume version of the Malaspina journal includes such invaluable additional material as the personal correspondences between Malaspina and Ministro de Marinha Valdez, a complete modern translation of the *Maldonado Relatión* with associated original commentaries and a detailed essay on the survey techniques employed by the Spaniards.

Warren Cook's generally excellent *Flood Tide of the Empire, Spain and the Pacific Northwest 1543-1819*, remains a rigorous overview of the entire period of Spanish contact and exploration on the Northwest Coast, and his bibliographic entries were particularly helpful in the research for this thesis.[28] Other secondary sources of great value have been the John Kendrick biography of Malaspina *Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary,* which includes useful perspectives of the events following the completion of

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[27] The preface of the modern Hakluyt version of the Malaspina Viaje outlines the history of previous publications and the difficulties in assembling the latest. Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, Preface, xvii.

[28] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819.*

the voyage and leading to Malaspina's imprisonment.[29] Freeman Tovell's excellent biography of Quadra y Bodega is one of the best English language sources for understanding the inner workings of the naval division of *San Blas* that preceded the Malaspina expedition to the Northwest Coast.[30] Donald Cutter's book *Malaspina and Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast, 1791 & 1792* serves as a well researched introduction to the Malaspina Expedition in the context of other enlightenment voyages that preceded it and includes a valuable treatise on the *Galliano* "sub-expedition" dispatched by Malaspina to explore what is now the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Georgia Strait.[31] Finally, the elusive Dario Manfredi biography of Malaspina has proven an essential source of information for the early life and career of the mariner.[32]

Two secondary sources that have been invaluable to this thesis in contextualizing Spanish early modern political theory are Anthony Pagden's; *Lords of all the World*, and *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*.[33] The argument for a perceptible bias

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[29] John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

[30] Freeman Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

[31] Cutter's introduction to the Hakluyt version of the Malaspina *viaje* is a masterful overview of most maritime aspects of the expedition. Cutter, "Introduction."; Donald Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991).

[32] An unpublished manuscript copy of Dario Manfredi's biography was provided by Professor John Black of Vancouver Island College. Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*.

[33] Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*; Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

in historical representations of the Northwest Coast towards English and Russian perspectives has been identified in several recent works including Drury's 2010 University of Victoria thesis on Spanish activities in the Georgia Strait and Strait of Juan de Fuca: *"That Immense and Dangerous Sea": Spanish Imperial Policy and Power during the Exploration of the Salish Sea, 1790-1791,* which is admirable in its balance and detail. Drury goes so far as to identify both the Spanish and First Nations as historically marginalized groups in the Pacific Northwest.[34] *Imperial Eyes* by May Louise Pratt has been extremely useful in shedding light on the scientism/classification movement of the late 18th century and the relationship between science and the European imperial project.[35]

The first chapter of this thesis will review the Imperial Spanish 'project' from Columbus to the Pacific incursions by the English and Russians in the 18th century and will include some of the theoretical basis for both Spanish and English territorial claims. The dynastic shift in Spain with the Bourbon succession is explained as well as the infiltration of elements of enlightenment thinking into what was still an absolutist monarchy with a functional Catholic inquisition. The nature and progress of the "Bourbon Reforms" are introduced and explained within the context of Spanish ultramarine realm. Spain's "thrust" up the *Alta California* is profiled through the introduction of the primary protagonist of Spain's colonization and consolidation of the

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[34] Drury, "That Immense and Dangerous Sea': Spanish Imperial Policy and Power During the Exploration of the Salish Sea, 1790-1791."

[35] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.*

Northwest Coast, *Visitador* (and future Minister of the Indies) Jose de Galvez. Galvez's energetic attention to threats presented by both England and Russia directly led to the establishment of the naval division of San Blas and all the Spanish expeditions to the Northwest Coast originating from that station.

The second chapter introduces the central character of Alessandro Malaspina, his biographical background and early naval career, the origins and nature of his personal philosophy (which is unique in almost any comparison among his contemporary mariners) and Malaspina's personal vision for a greater Spanish empire. The chapter examines a tension in the Malaspina project that becomes visible even in the planning stages, when the gulf between Malaspina's personality, enlightenment values, and ambitions become clearly oppositional to the regime and monarch he serves. Some of this tension is evident in Malaspina's journal entries and correspondences, and it foreshadows the tragic chain of events on Malaspina's return to Spain (presented in the opening vignette of this introduction). The discovery of the *Maldonado Relatión* in the course of preparatory research for the voyage is presented, along with the initial responses from both the Spanish government, Malaspina and his closest advisors.

The third chapter will present a narrative analysis of the events between July 1789, when the Malaspina Expedition first arrived in the Americas, and July 1791 when it returned to Nootka after voyaging to Port Mulgrave and Prince William Sound. While the search for a temperate-latitude northwest passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans did not end after the discoveries (or non-discoveries) of Malaspina in this leg of

the expedition, the ironic success of Maldonado, (albeit 200 years too late) in leading Spain's navy to 58 degrees north did lead to a greater detailed understanding of the areas geography.

The fourth chapter examines some of the technical issues surrounding cartography in the era of the Malaspina expedition and how these issues were related to the goals of the original mission's proposal and the unexpected diversion of the expedition to Northwest Coast waters. The Spanish cartography of the late 18th century while formally different than English or German maps suffered no technical deficiencies in comparison. The methods and production of the Spanish survey, particularly at the far peripheries of the Spanish Empire, will be placed into context with contemporary efforts by England and France including comparisons of archival maps using the unique software tool MapAnalyst. Most importantly, the use of the competing English and Spanish cartographies and the impact these maps had on their competing Imperial projects will be addressed.

The Spanish obsession with English activities in the region did not belie ignorance of a Russian presence. The English and Spanish competition in the aftermath of Cook's Third Expedition was perhaps providential to Russia's enterprise in "Russian America," a topic that will be explored in some detail in the concluding chapter. Two very different perspectives on critical cartography with relation to Spanish Imperialism by scholars Raymond Craib and Ricardo Padron will be incorporated in the concluding chapter to examine not only the role of the Malaspina Expedition in relation to the

Nootka Crisis, but the broader activity of cartography in the service of a Spanish absolutist empire.[36] Padron suggests that the very secretive and exclusionary policies of Spanish state cartography that for some historians taints Spain as a scientifically backwards and counter-Enlightenment, might actually exclude Spain from some of the criticism focused on other contemporary powers such as England, which actively pursued publication and distribution of its state cartography.

The modern map of the Yakutat area shown in figure 2, if expanded to the Northeast, contains one further name: Disenchantment Bay. Malaspina's map of the area made in 1791 has a slightly different name: *Puerto del Desengaño*. The anglicized version at first glance seems imperfect, a literal translation of the Spanish noun *Desengaño* would most often be *disappointment,* but another translation is: *realization of the truth, especially after a period of deceit*. The title of this thesis: *Alessandro Malaspina and the Voyage of Disenchantment* is a multi-layered reference to Malaspina's personal crisis with reconciling his philosophy with his sense of duty to an absolutist monarchy and the external experience of serving royal caprice at the physical and conceptual limit of Spain's political imaginary. In counterpoint to the geometries of Malaspina's navigation, the conclusion of this thesis will attempt to place Malaspina the "visionary"(as described by Kendrick) in the context of the other enlightenment voyages of the late eighteenth century to the Pacific and current critical theory of these wider

[36] B. Craib, "Cartography and power in the conquest and creation of new Spain," *Review Literature And Arts Of The Americas* 35, no. 1 (2010). Ricardo Padrón, "Mapping Plus Ultra: Cartography, Space, and Hispanic Modernity," *Representations* 79, no. 1 (August 2002): 28-60.

activities or projects. Anyone who has read the words of Malaspina recognizes the incongruities within his belief system. Malaspina was clearly an enlightened thinker, but with a position of privilege in a government that, while perhaps not as perverse as Voltaire's portrayal in *Candide*, was nevertheless an absolutist Catholic monarchy with a functional inquisition.[37] Warren Cook in *Flood Tide of the Empire, Spain and the Pacific Northwest 1543-1819,* dedicates a section of his book to the Malaspina episode in 1791 with the title: *The Apogee of Spanish Exploration*. This thesis will, in kind, argue that the aspirations and efforts of Spain in this era through the efforts of Malaspina and others, while ultimately of limited short term result, had a long and deep impact on the development of Alaska and Canada (and in fact the entire west coast of north America) far beyond the paltry scattering of Spanish place names on current maps that more often than not mystify modern Americans and Canadians.

[37] An Inquisition with which, it will be shown, Malaspina had more than one encounter.

CHAPTER 1: Nueva Galicia And The Madness Of Minister Galvez

I. The "Spanish Lake"

> "Any establishment by Russia, or any other foreign power, on the continent, ought to be prevented, not because the king needs to enlarge his realms, as he has within his known dominions more than it will be possible to populate in centuries, but in order to avoid consequences brought by having any other neighbours than the Indians". [1]
>
> -Viceroy Antonio Maria de Bucareli y Ursua, July 27th, 1773.

The motivations and rationale for the Spanish activities on the Northwest Coast of America in the 18th century continue to be debated, but any interpretation must recognize it is difficult to find a member of the Spanish government or military of any rank that was not (on record) convinced of the legitimacy of Spain's claims to the entire Pacific coast of the Americas. There were also of course, the Papal "donations" of Tordesillas and Zaragosa neatly dividing the world in half for the Catholic kingdoms of Spain and Portugal.[2] No other European nation (including catholic France) would honor the claims contained in Tordesillas and Zaragosa, but Spain (and Portugal) would defend their claims in the Americas many times and with sufficient success that Spain's colonial empire in the western hemisphere was still largely intact by the 18th century.

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[1] Warren Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 55.

[2] A good modern interpretation of Spain's internal philosophy regarding its sovereignty in the Americas can be found in Pagden. Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) , 73-83.

With virtually unchallenged Spanish claims to the entire western coastline of the Americas, an established enclave in the Philippine Islands, and with the most of the East Asia coast held by seemingly impenetrable Asian polities, the Pacific ocean was considered by many a "Spanish Lake".[3] However, the factors that led to the burst of Spanish activity between 1774 and 1793 on the Northwest Coast were only in part the legacy of ancient claims and donations; they were at least in equal part a reflection of King Charles III, the most vital Spanish monarch since Phillip II, and the men Charles III chose to serve him. During the reign of Charles III, the foremost protagonist in Spanish policy and activities on the Northwest Coast – what would briefly be referred to a *Nueva Galicia*, was José de Gálvez y Gallardo, a man by all accounts, possessed with obsessive intensity and focus. Gálvez' tenure, first as visitador in Nueva Espana, and then subsequently as Minister of the Indies for Spain, would have an indelible impression on events on the Northwest Coast from 1774 to 1794, and it will be argued, on the history of Canada and Alaska to this day.[4]

II. Bourbon Spain

The Spanish Habsburg dynasty literally died out in 1700 with the death of King Charles II, who was without issue. In a pattern that would be repeated several times in the 18th century, most of the great powers of Europe went to war over the succession to a

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[3] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 7-8.

[4] Ibid., 48.

throne, in this case who would inherit Spain and its possessions. Members of both the Habsburg family of Austria and the Bourbon family of France had legitimate claims to the throne. The opposition to the Bourbon claim, at least from an English perspective was the prospect of one monarch ruling both France and Spain. The War of the Spanish Succession was long and bitter. After a number of tactical setbacks for the Habsburg-aligned allies in 1709-1710, the combatants negotiated the Peace of Utrecht (1713) which left Bourbon Phillip V on the Spanish throne in return for various territorial concessions on both sides and the agreement that the thrones of France and Spain would never be united in one king.[5]

The Bourbon Succession in Spain had a real and salutary effect on a Spanish Empire that had become moribund in the waning years of the Habsburg line. One argument is that elements of Enlightenment thought filtered into Spain with the Bourbon succession and in some ways contributed to an era of reform and modernization, but it should also be noted that in its early stages, much of that reform and modernization applied to the military establishments, especially the *Marina Real*-the Royal Navy which, weak at the outset of the war of succession was decimated in the conflict itself.[6] It has also been suggested that Spain was not so much an ally of France as its satellite state, certainly in the reign of Phillip V when agents of his grandfather Louis XIV remained

[5] The succession of the Habsburg candidate for the Spanish crown, Archduke Charles, to the throne of Holy Roman Emperor with the death of his older brother in 1711, cooled English enthusiasm for the war of the Spanish succession that might make the Holy Roman Emperor also the King of Spain, a situation last witnessed with Charles V and considered counter to English interests. John Lynch, *Bourbon Spain* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 35.

[6] Interpreting the Spanish Bourbon succession is found in detail with Richard Herr, *The Eighteenth-Century Revolution in Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).

well placed in the Spanish King's court and household.[7] In brief the line of succession for the Spanish Bourbon dynasty was as follows: Phillip V's oldest son Louis I succeeded after Phillip V abdicated in 1724, Louis I died of smallpox in less than 1 year and Phillip V returned to the throne until his death in 1746. Phillip V was then succeeded by his next son Ferdinand VI who reigned until his death in 1759. Ferdinand VI was succeeded by his brother Charles III (figure 1.1).[8]

Figure 1.1. Charles III Bourbon King of Spain, ca. 1761. Source: Museo del Prado.

While Spain's position and power in the 18th century had certainly waned in comparison to the early Hapsburg dynasty, many historians see Spain as emerging from

[7] Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 46-49.

[8] Ibid., 22-23.

the war of Bourbon succession with greater potential than before.[9] Yet Spain had also emerged structurally different in that the loss of old European dominions had increased the focus on the ultramarine.[10] Bourbon Spain under Charles III embarked on ambitious programs of reform and consolidation with particular emphasis on the ultramarine Spanish world which was recognized (both inside and outside of Spain) as the life-blood of the empire.[11] The example of Spain's chief rival England and the rebellion of its American colonies was not lost on Charles III or his ministers. In 1778 the future Prime Minister the Conde Aranda, then president of the Council of Castille wrote: "What is certain is that we are now faced with the need to change many of the ideas by which we have been guided since the discovery of the New World. For the theatre of that new world is no longer the same, and as a result demands that we change and consolidate our system."[12] There was well-considered awareness within the government of Charles III that what had worked in the past would, in all probability, not work very much longer.

Reform for Spain in the era of the Enlightenment was also not entirely about economics and administration. Spain's greatness had been founded on an image reaching back to the reconquista era as "defender of the faith" and even civilization itself. Much of Spain's positive and heroic image had been tarnished if not entirely blotted out during the

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[9] Herr, *The Eighteenth-Century Revolution in Spain*, 11.

[10] Pagden, *Lords of all the World*, 194.

[11] Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 341-345.

[12] Aranda would go on to propose an independent commonwealth of American dominions much as Malaspina would in his Axiomas Politicos 15 years later. Aranda is quoted in, Joaquin Oltra and Maria Angeles Perez Samper, *El Conde de Aranda y los Estados Unidos.* (Barcelona: P.P.U., 1987), 84.

reign of the Philippine kings, the Inquisition and the long brutal war over the Low Countries. Many in the Spanish court were painfully aware of the "Black Legend" and its impact on prestige and diplomacy.[13] Gibson defines the Black Legend as: "The Accumulated tradition of propaganda and Hispanophobia according to which Spanish imperialism is regarded as cruel, bigoted, exploitative and self-righteous in excess of reality."[14] The reform of Spain's reputation in the eyes of the world (particularly the Protestant world) would be as difficult a challenge as ending maritime smuggling or any of the other wildfires of Spanish colonial administration, and for an implacable foe with as much to gain as England, the effort would in the end prove futile.

Charles III was a pragmatic, engaged and interested ruler. He delegated authority to trusted, capable and remarkably (by any standards of the era) enlightened ministers, but even Aranda or Campomanes recognized that: ". . .no modern European monarchy would be prepared to surrender short-term political authority for long-term economic and, in some wider general sense, human gain, Monarchies were rarely enlightened agencies. Even the most rational were still driven primarily to the pursuit of honour and 'reputation'."[15] So that, even for the reform-minded subject (such as Alessandro

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[13] The Black Legend (*La leyenda negra)* refers to a style of historical writing that demonized the Spanish Empire in a politically motivated propagandistic effort to morally condemn Spain . England and the Low Countries are most often associated with Black Legend material-two parts of Europe with almost unrestricted printing that lent itself to anonymous pamphleteering. See William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England* (durham: Duke University Press, 1971); Charles Gibson, *The black legend; anti-Spanish attitudes in the Old World and the New.* (New York: Knopf, 1971).

[14] Charles Gibson, *The Colonial Period in Latin American History* (Washington: American Historical Association, 1970), 13.

[15] Pedro Rodriguez de Campomanes (1723-1802) was a Spanish statesman and writer who like the Conde Aranda also served as president of the Council of Castille (the equivalent of Prime Minister before such

Malaspina), ambition in the politics of Spain and its empire would in large part involve probing the limits of absolutism.

III. José de Gálvez

The management and implementation of the large plate of reforms instituted by King Charles III required men of special character and talent, and one of the hallmarks of the reign of Charles III was his enthusiasm for employing men from all classes in his government based on the merit of their performance.[16] One of Charles III's most valued and effective ministers was José de Gálvez y Gallardo (figure 1.2), a lawyer with humble origins in the Malaga region.[17] Charles III dispatched Gálvez to Nuevo Espana in 1761, and in 1764 the King gave him virtually unlimited authority in the role of *Visitador* (inspector). The motivations for installing a *Visitador* in the sweeping viceroyalty with authority over even the viceroy were of course financial; revenues from the colony were flagging.[18] Galvez was energetic and very busy while in Mexico. When Charles III implemented the suppression of the Jesuit order in 1767, riots broke out in various

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post existed in Spain), Campomanes is most remembered for two progressive essays on reforming Spain's economy, *Discurso sobre el fomento de la industria popular*, 1774, and *Discurso sobre la education popular de los artesanos y su fomento*, 1775. Pagden, *Lords of all the World*, 195.

[16] Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 232.

[17] While the circumstances of Galvez' family were poor at his birth, and his brothers were employed as muleteers or teamsters, the family did have a storied pedigree, see: H. I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-General of New Spain, 1765-1771* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1916) , 2.

[18] In 1764 the viceroyalty of Nuevo Espana stretched (on Spanish maps) from what is now the Bering Sea east to the Mississippi river, south to the Darién gap and would have included what is now Louisiana and Florida. See map in figure 1.1.

districts of Nuevo Espana, Galvez personally supervised the royal response which included summary executions and life imprisonment for offenders in the districts of San Luis Potosí, Guanajuato and parts of Michoacán.[19]

Figure 1.2. José de Gálvez y Gallardo. Source: Junta de Iconografía Española, Madrid.

After effectively restoring order and royal authority in the South, Galvez turned his attention to problems in the North, particularly an insurgency along the frontier by recalcitrant Seri, Pima, and Apache Indians.

In August 1769 Gálvez was ensconced in the colonial settlement of Alamos in the mountains above the Sonoran coastline of the Gulf of California where he took ill. By the

[19] The Jesuits were well established in the Americas and were often closely allied with the interests of Indian and Mestizo groups whom they defended. Less than 20 years earlier Indians in Jesuit mission communities above the Uruguay River had fought pitched battles against combined Portuguese-Spanish armies, the revolt was seen by Spain and Portugal as incitement by militant Jesuits. John Hemming, *Red Gold: The conquest of the Brazilan Indians, 1500-1760* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 462-486

end of the month he seemed to have recovered, and he made an arduous three week journey to the settlement of Pitic to confer with Army officers. Early in the morning on the 14th of October Gálvez frightened his staff by loudly announcing that he had received a personal communication from St. Francis of Assisi revealing to him the incompetence of the Spanish officer corps, and in response Gálvez would end the Indian revolt by personally importing 600 apes from Guatemala that he would put into uniform and employ against the insurgents. The visitador's condition deteriorated in spite of numerous bleedings by his expedition's surgeons; by March he was proclaiming himself "the King of Prussia, the King of Sweden, protector of the house of Bourbon, the venerable Palafox, and even the Eternal Father."[20] Remarkably Gálvez apparently recovered from his madness after his party retreated to Chihuahua and finally to Mexico City. He went on to return to Spain and serve the King in the position of Minister of the Indies until his death in 1787.[21]

The causes of Gálvez' symptoms in the winter of 1769-1770 will probably remain a mystery, but well before his conversation with St. Francis he had demonstrated a certain

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[20]Galvez's alleged reference to "Palafox" is exceptionally obscure and may actually lend credence to this account. *Juan de Palafox y Mendoza* (June 26, 1600 – October 1, 1659) was a Spanish Archbishop in the Roman Catholic Church and very briefly the Viceroy of Nuevo Espana from June 10, 1642 to November 23, 1642. Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-General of New Spain, 1765-1771*. 280.

[21] Most of the details of Galvez' malady remained unknown to those outside of his inner retinue, and were only revealed after it came to light that some of his attendants had been arrested in Nuevo Espana after Galvez returned to Spain in what appears to be an effort to cover-up the incident. The court testimony of one of those servants Juan Manuel de Viniegra remains the primary source for the report. Ibid., 281.

amount of obsessiveness in regard to the security of the realm's borders.[22] Before the onset of his most serious symptoms Gálvez, while inspecting Baja California in the summer of 1769 wrote to the Archbishop of Nuevo Espana claiming he had actually seen Russians![23] Unfortunately for Gálvez and the kingdom he served, the delusion of Russians arriving in territory that was considered Spanish had some basis in reality.

Spain learned of Russian activities at the far peripheries of North America at about the same time as everyone else in Europe (meaning that Spain came to the information quite late) with the publication of a series of French maps in the mid 1750s that were based on Russian information from the Bering expedition of 1741.[24] Spain's diplomatic corps in St. Petersburg did not report directly on the Russian activities until 1761.[25] It seems likely that a bureaucrat as highly placed as Gálvez, future Spanish Minister of the Indies, would have had knowledge of these reports, but instead Gálvez seemed spurred to action while in Nuevo Espana after meeting with Spanish General Antonio Ricardo, who presented the Russian advances to Gálvez in threatening terms for the first time. Spanish plans to expand northward and colonize Alta California may have existed before the Russian activities were known but the Russian reports created the first

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[22] Galvez' recovery and subsequent productive career after leaving Mexico suggest a possible organic cause for his temporary insanity, poisoning or even malaria that could have been acquired while inspecting San Blas in 1768. Cristiane Kaufmann M.D., in discussion with the author, September, 2011.

[23] There is no evidence of any Russian activities this far south in this time frame. Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 53.

[24] L. Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific," *Imago Mundi* 3, no. 1 (1939): 93-95.

[25] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 46.

genuine sense of urgency for the project.[26] In keeping with Gálvez' all-encompassing and obsessive approach to preserving the integrity of Spain's ultramarine realm, consolidating and reiterating Spain's sovereign claims would become a hallmark of his administration as Minister of the Indies

IV. **Sovereign Claims**

Spain's territorial claims to the northwest coast of North America unquestionably preceded those of any other European power. The claims of the nations that would challenge Spain for this territory (primarily England) were largely founded on arguments with no more basis in any international legal principle than (the largely arcane) Spanish claims they sought to nullify.[27] The legal principles underpinning the first Spanish claims in the Americas by Columbus were a curious (and not entirely Spanish) mixture of civil and canon law which defined land occupied by non Christians as in-effect vacant and open to claim on the basis of priority. Columbus, and most of the Europeans who followed him indeed discovered very little vacant and empty wilderness, but instead at virtually every landing place they encountered multitudes of inhabitants.[28] The transfer

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[26]Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-General of New Spain, 1765-1771*, 245-246.

[27] Pagden, *Lords of all the World*, 75-77.

[28] The literal English term for wilderness is difficult to find an equivalent in 15th and 16th century Spanish and Portuguese. The word used in the 1500 Cabral expedition which landed on the coast of what is now Brasil was 'Sertao' which is today translated as 'hinterland', 'Sertao fell out of common Portuguese usage and now ironically is used in Brasil to describe the arid and lightly-populated interior in Northern Brasil. The concept of vacant wilderness could rarely be applied to any of the new lands encountered by Europeans in the post renaissance discoveries in Africa, Asia or the Americas.

of the lands and indeed the persons themselves of the Americas into Spanish sovereignty did not occur without discussion and debate in Spain.[29] Often the discourse surrounded the principle of a papal donation embodied in the treaty of Tordesillas (figure 1.3) and its later addendum the treaty of Zaragosa, whereby the church by the authority of the Pope donated to Spain discovered land in return for bringing the pagan souls of the inhabitants to the knowledge of Christianity.[30]

Figure 1.3. Treaty of Tordesillas, one of the two original manuscript copies, 1494. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa.

[29] Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 13-22.

[30] The principle of Papal donation was not new, but at root was the apocryphal Donation of Constantine which although thoroughly revealed as a fake was still relied on as fact by some members of the church into the 19th century. See: H.C. Lea, "The 'Donation of Constantine'," *The English Historical Review* 10, no. XXXVII (1895): 86.

In 1513 a somewhat renegade Spaniard, Vasco Núñez de Balboa crossed the narrow isthmus of land that is now Panama and arrived on the shore of a sea that was unknown to the Europeans. Balboa claimed the sea and all the lands touching it for Spain.[31] The sea "discovered" by Balboa in 1513 would not be sailed by Europeans until the Spanish expedition commanded by Portuguese *Fernão de Magalhães* (better known by his hispanicized name Ferdinand Magellan) in 1519-1522. [32]

Geographic knowledge in the early 16th century was imperfect; the Columbus concept of sailing west to ultimately reach the east was recognized as valid, but not entirely understood (in terms of the circumference of the earth) until after the voyage of Magellan.[33] The Spaniards and the Portuguese would, after Magellan's first circumnavigation extend the terms of the original Tordesillas concept of a dividing meridian in the Atlantic ocean to an 'antemeridian' 180 degrees of longitude west (or east). This theoretical line of longitude (figure 1.4) coincidentally fell close to the most valuable spice production region in the world, a set of islands (now the Maluccas) whose possession would remain in dispute for more than a century (and until the solution was found for accurately measuring longitude).

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[31] In 1513 Castile and Leon would have been the reign of Joanna I (The Mad) but in effect Spain in this period was ruled by Archbishop Regent Cisneros followed by Joanna's husband Philip the Fair and finally the succession of Charles I in 1516. A good account of Balboa can be found in: J.B. Sosa, E.J. Arce, and C.M. Gasteazoro, *Compendio de historia de Panamá* (Universidad de Panama, 1971).

[32] The word 'discovery' I am using throughout this paper with acknowledgement of the essay: Wilcomb E. Washburn, "The Meaning of 'Discovery' in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," in *An Expanding World: The Globe Encircled and the World Revealed*, ed. Ursula Lamb, 3rd ed. (Aldershot, Brookfield: Variorum, 1995), 49-69.

[33] W. G. L. Randles, "The Evaluation of Columbus' 'India' Project by Portuguese and Spanish Cosmographers in the Light of the Geographic Science of the Time," in *The Globe Encircled and the World Revealed*, ed. Ursula Lamb (Aldershot, Brookfield: Variorum, 1995), 12-26.

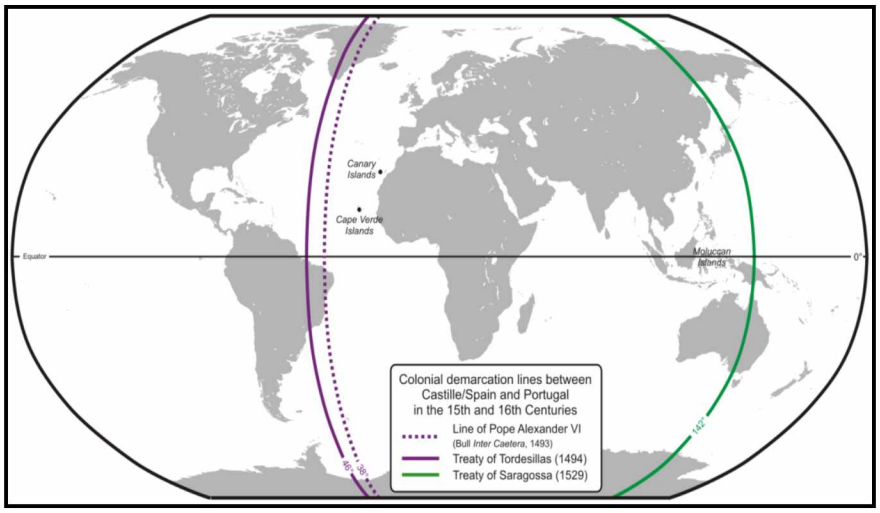

Figure 1.4. The Tordesillas meridian, dividing the 'new world' into Portuguese and Spanish hemispheres. Source: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Spain_and_Portugal.png.

As Spain and Portugal competed for the profits of the Spice Islands there was relatively little argument between them over the division of the Americas; except for the easternmost shoulder of what is now South America that fell into Portugal's portion of the world divided by Tordesillas, the rest, which included all of America touching the Pacific Ocean, was clearly (according to the Catholic Church and accepted by Portugal and Spain) Spanish territory.[34]

V. The Naval Division of San Blas

While Spanish territories in the Americas were vast, the colonization of the Pacific coast was retarded and uneven in comparison to that of the Atlantic coasts. The viceroyalty of Peru for example, with its capital in Lima was far more developed by the 18th century

[34] The original Spanish name for the Pacific Ocean that would be used even after Magellan endowed it as "Pacifico" was "the southern sea". Portugal would be absorbed by Spain from 1580-1640 , but long a traditional ally of England, Portugal was often opposed to or at war with Spain.

than the west coast of Nueva Espana (particularly north of Acapulco), partly as a result of the great mineral wealth within Peru.[35] The route of the regular Manila Galleon traffic that originated in Peru, took the fleets far to the south when west bound and far north on their return to the Americas. The ideal route was generally well north of the still undiscovered Hawaiian Islands, but would usually reacquire the coast of mainland America north of what is now San Francisco Bay, often in the vicinity Cape Mendocino.[36]

Spain's enemies in the form of reformation England and the Low Countries became attracted to the west coast of the Americas not for the prospect of unclaimed territory for colonization, but the potential plunder of rich and undefended Spanish shipping both in the form of the Manila galleons and inter-coastal transports between Peru, Chile and Nuevo Espana. Between 1575 and 1742 there were at least 25 different privateers preying on shipping on the west coast of the Americas.[37] One of Sir Francis Drake's prizes from his raiding expedition of 1578 carried not only bullion but detailed charts and sailing directions for the until-then secret Spanish Acapulco-Manila route.[38]

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[35] Peru's wealth was based, like Nueva Espana's, on silver mining. Nueva Espana's production had surpassed Peru by the early 18th century. H.S. Klein, "The Great Shift: the rise of Mexico and the Decline of Peru in the Spanish American Colonial Empire, 1680–1809," *Revista de Historia Económica (Second Series)* 13, no. 1 (1995): 35–61.

[36] Cape Mendocino is south of modern Humboldt Bay California, 40°26'24.84" N 124°24'27.43" W. Because of the imperfection of navigational science before the 19th century ships would literally sail on a compass heading until they "ran into" land , the west coast of America was a large target, and once found, a ship would follow the coast south to the Spanish destination port.

[37] Peter Gerhard, *Pirates on the west coast of New Spain, 1575-1742* (Glendale: A.H. Clark, 1960), 239.

[38] There is some documentary evidence that Drake was also searching for a northwest passage. E.G.R. Taylor, "The Missing Draft Project of Drake's Voyage of 1577-80," GJ 75 (1930): 44-47; K.R. Andrews, "

After several months of terrorizing Spanish shipping and ports, Drake sailed north and while grounded for hull repairs in a still unidentified bay he claimed "New Albion" for his Queen and England. While Spanish territorial claims in the Americas are often criticized as audacious in scope, the English were not to be outdone. After Drake, English land grants in the Atlantic American colonies often extended all the way to the Pacific Ocean, well before European survey technology could even determine the degrees of longitude and distance those claims implied.[39] Except for the intermittent penetrations by corsairs like Drake, Cavendish and many lesser known "captains", Spain seemed lethargically secure in its claims to the west coast of North America for over 200 years.[40]

Charles III's visitador to Nueva Espana, José de Gálvez was characterized as a reformer but a conservative reformer in the service of the territorial consolidation of the Empire. In between quashing civil uprisings over the suppression of the Jesuit Order and reorganizing the economics of Nuevo Espana, he was alarmed over the potential Russian expansion into Spanish territory on the northwest coast. Gálvez decided, perhaps not singlehandedly but in full exercise of his broad authority, that Alta California had to be colonized and supported and Russian expansion checked. Indian resistance in Sonora and beyond the Colorado River blocked an overland solution for logistical support. The Spanish navy was virtually nonexistent in the Pacific Ocean except for the Manila

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The Aims of Drake's Voyage of 1577-80," AHR 73 (1968): 724-41; Henry Raup Wagner, *Sir Francis Drake's Voyage Around the World: Its Aims and Achievements* (San Francisco: J. Howell, 1926), 101.

[39] Oko, A. S., "Francis Drake and Nova Albion," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 43 (1964): 148-149.

[40] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 41.

galleon and coastal shipping based much further out of range in Peru and Chile. Gálvez' solution to the challenge of supporting Spain's interests in Alta California and Nuevo Galicia was as impulsive and in some ways unbalanced as the hallucinations he experienced in the winter of 1767 and would be known as the naval division of San Blas.

The choice of San Blas, located almost 600 miles north of Acapulco, as the principle naval station for supporting Alta California and the north coast was a fateful one, few locations would have been less suitable. The concept of disease being transmitted by insects was not understood by Europeans in the 18th century. Tropical lowlands were simply labeled "unhealthy." Outbreaks of yellow fever, malaria, and dengue are still today endemic to large swaths of the American tropics and kill hundreds every year. In the 18th century insect borne disease was totally devastating and the only defense was to avoid the locations it was known to inhabit. Unfortunately, San Blas was one of these locations, consisting of a lowland mangrove swamp at 21 degrees latitude around the estuary of a slow moving shallow river that was prone to silting and shifting channels.[41] The principle recommendations for San Blas as a harbor were the supply of tropical hardwood nearby and its proximity to Spain's objectives in the Californias. San Blas was even difficult to supply by land; it was claimed that it was more economical to ship artillery from Manila than overland from Vera Cruz on Nueva Espana's Atlantic coast. The inefficiency and unsuitability of San Blas as a seaport cannot be

[41] Michael E. Thurman, "The Establishment of the Department of San Blas and Its Initial Naval Fleet: 1767-1770," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 43, no. 1 (February 1963): 76.

overemphasized in considering the overall Spanish project on the Northwest Coast that would follow.[42]

Visitador Gálvez was on his way to inspect the potential of San Blas as a Spanish naval port in the spring of 1768 (more than year before his madness struck) when he received an order by royal courier to direct an expedition to colonize Monterey Bay to ensure against the possibility of Russian incursion into Alta California.[43] Gálvez responded to the order with great dispatch, immediately calling an initial council to decide both how to implement the royal order to occupy Alta California and how to create the new naval division of San Blas. The gravity of Spain's concern is reflected by the extraordinary decision that the naval division of San Blas would be an independent administrative unit answering directly to the Viceroy of Nuevo Espana, bypassing regional chains-of-command.[44] The establishment and support of settlements, missions and garrisons in Alta California and further north was clearly a priority for the crown.

Gálvez and Viceroy Carlos Francisco de Croix drafted a plan for the effort to colonize Alta California and beyond, along with a new administrative organization for the northern interior of Sonora, Sinaloa, and New Vizcaya. One of the Spanish naval officers to attend Gálvez' first council in San Blas was Juan Jose Perez Hernandez. Perez belonged to the *Cuerpo de Pilotos*, a cadre of new graduates from the Spanish naval

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[42] Michael E. Thurman, *The Naval Department of San Blas, New Spain's Bastion for the Alta California and Nootka, 1767 to 1798* (Glendale: A.H. Clark, 1967), 31.

[43] The Royal order was dated January 23rd, 1768: Galvez, "Ynforme," December 31, 1771, cited in: Michael E. Thurman, "The Establishment of the Department of San Blas and Its Initial Naval Fleet: 1767-1770," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 43, no. 1 (February 1963): 66.

[44] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 48-50.

academy that was part of the Bourbon reforms to the navy, Perez would emerge as a central figure in the early colonization of Alta California and the first Spanish explorations north of San Francisco Bay.

VI. Bucareli and the Northwest Coast

Carlos Francisco de Croix was recalled to Spain in 1771; his replacement as Viceroy of Nuevo Espana would be Juan Antonio Bucareli y Ursua (figure 1.5) the former governor of Cuba. The Court of Charles III (which in time would include Minister of the Indies Galvez) continued to receive disturbing ambassadorial reports of both English and Russian activities on the extreme northwest coast of North America.[45] The Spanish perspective remained that the area in question fell under the claim of Spain and the jurisdiction of Nueva Espana. Bucareli, like his predecessor de Croix, was at a significant material disadvantage, with a shortage not only of ships but of men to command and crew them.[46] The government in Spain was not unaware or insensitive to his predicament; in 1773 Spanish Minister of State Grimaldi communicated to Bucareli that he had informed the King that ". . .it would be necessary to select able and expert youths who could, with the ships at your disposal in San Blas, frequent those seas as far as Monterey and even

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[45]Charles Edward Chapman, *The founding of Spanish California: the northwestward expansion of New Spain 1687-1783* (New York: The McMillan Company, 1916), 217.

[46] Juan Francisco de la Bodega Y Quadra, *Bodega's Narrative*, trans. Katrina Moore (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1972), 1-6.

higher if possible." [47] A plan was devised to supply the San Blas department with six new young officers. "The Six" (as they became known among Spanish historians) included Bruno de Heceta y Dudagoita, Diego de Choquet, Miguel Manrique, Fernando Bernardo Quiros y Miranda, Juan de Ayala and Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra.[48]

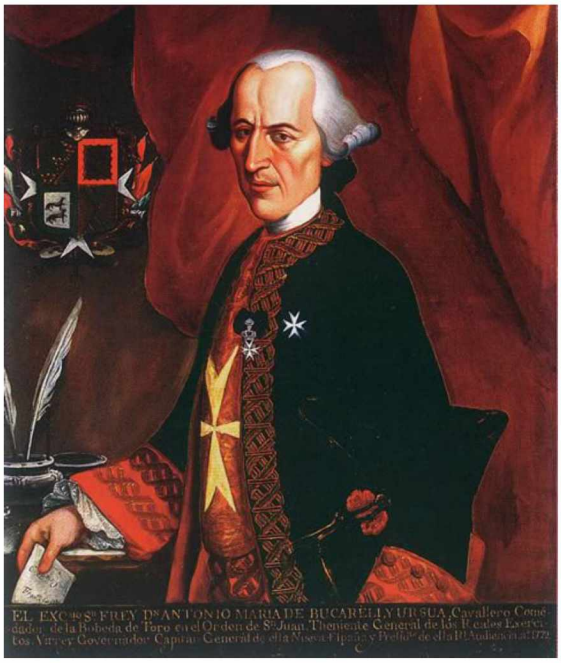

Figure 1.5. Juan Antonio Bucareli y Ursua, 54th Viceroy of Nueva Espana. Source: Bicentenario México.

Spain's first expedition to Alta California was commanded by the most senior officer of the San Blas naval detachment at the time, Juan Perez.[49] The voyage of Perez was designed in concert with the effort to resupply the newly established Spanish missions in Alta California. Perez, after resupplying the California colonies was directed

[47] Freeman Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 15.

[48] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 16.

[49] Second in command was Esteban Jose Martinez whose role in future events will be notable. See chapter 3.

to proceed further north, following the coast and achieving 60 degrees latitude north, which was positionally equivalent to Vitus Bering's first landfall, Kayak Island near present day Cordova.[50] Bucareli also gave Perez a secret and detailed set of 32 instructions not to be opened until underway. Those instructions, along with specifying acts of sovereignty and possession, included protocols for interacting with indigenous people in language that revealed a feint echo of the Empire that had spawned the "black legend":

> The kindness of the King, who entrusted this government of New Spain to my charge, not only imposes on me the obligation of preserving these vast territories for him but also that of endeavoring to enlarge them, as much as I am able, through new discoveries in unknown areas, so that their numerous Indian inhabitants, attracted to the kind, mellow, and desired vassalage of his majesty, may receive by means of the spiritual conquest the light of the Gospel which will free them from the darkness of idolatry in which they live, and will show them the road to eternal salvation. These are the true motives that move the pious heart of his Majesty in these undertakings. [51]

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[50] Wallace M. Olson, *Through Spanish eyes : the Spanish voyages to Alaska, 1774-1792* (Auke Bay: Heritage Research, 2002), 18.

[51] The references to Christian conversion contained in Bucareli's instructions are exceptional in the history of Spanish activity on the north coast which is usually noted for its lack of missionary activity on the part of the Spaniards. Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 57-58.

Perez sailed in January 1774 and returned 10 months later achieving few of Bucareli's goals. Perez never exceeded 55 degrees latitude north, did not land and made none of the carefully choreographed sovereignty ceremonies described in his orders, nor did the Perez expedition find any evidence of Russians. Perez did sight land in what are now the Queen Charlotte Islands and importantly, anchored at what would become Nootka Bay, making contact and trading with the indigenous people who rowed their canoes out to meet the Spanish.[52] Perez explained his retreat to Viceroy Bucareli as follows:

> The reasons attending this decision seemed reasonable to me, being as follows (not doubting your Excellency's eminent consideration will judge them suitable.) In the first place the winds experienced were so consistently from the south, southeast and southwest, which are adverse for returning. Secondly, to see the men already weakened from the cold and various ailments which had attacked them. And thirdly, considering the small water supply we had and no certain port to replenish it; and at the same time finding only two full water casks, others partially and some entirely empty. [53]

The claim of a fresh water shortage in the Queen Charlotte Islands raises questions about Perez's judgment (if not his leadership); the west coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands

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[52] Olson, *Through Spanish eyes : the Spanish voyages to Alaska, 1774-1792*, 18-21.

[53] Much of the scholarship on the first Perez voyage must be reconsidered in light of recent discoveries of maps made by the expedition but the substance of Perez's reports are well documented. Herbert K. Beals, *Juan Perez on the Northwest Coast: Six documents of his expedition in 1774* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1989), 36-37.

averages over 150 inches of rainfall per year. Furthermore, the contrary winds Perez describes did permit him to return and make his report. Nevertheless, the Perez voyage was Spain's first documented penetration of the Northwest Coast, and the paucity of results (and failure to find any Russian settlements) only encouraged Minister Galvez and Viceroy Bucareli to form a second expedition.[54]

"The Six" young officers from the Cadiz naval academy (all of whom outranked Juan Perez) arrived in San Blas in December of 1774. The senior officer, Bruno de Heceta was chosen as the commander of what would be the next expedition; Perez would serve as his second-in-command. The expedition would consist of three ships, a frigate, the *Santiago*; a small schooner, the *Sonoma;* and the 64 foot packet boat the *San Carlos.*[55] One of "The Six" Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra (figure 1.6), was initially snubbed in the assignments to the new expedition. Rather than miss the opportunity altogether, he appealed to serve in a supporting capacity. He wrote: "Recognizing the Schooner's smallness and inadequacy for such a long and exposed voyage might occasion delay if it carried only one officer, I decided in the best interests of such an important commission that I should request embarkation as its second officer, disregarding the obstacle of having to serve under the orders of another of my own rank."[56]Quadra's brashness was rewarded. The crew of the 38 foot *Sonora* would consist

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[54] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 67.

[55] Olson, *Through Spanish eyes : the Spanish voyages to Alaska, 1774-1792*, 36-37.

[56]Quadra outranked officers given command positions for the expedition, in what is now interpreted as a deliberate snub due to his social status as a "Criollo" or Spaniard of colonial birth. Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra*,18.

of Juan de Ayala commanding, Bodega Y Quadra as second-in command, fourteen sailors (ten of whom were ranch hands and had never been to sea) and a late addition, a young pilot, Francisco Antonio Mourelle de la Rua recently of Veracruz.[57]

Figure 1.6. Juan Francisco Bodega y Quadra.
Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

Viceroy Bucareli's instructions to the expedition largely mirrored those of the previous *Perez* expedition except now the expedition was directed to press north to 65 degrees latitude.[58] The expedition departed San Blas March 16, 1775, but after only three days at sea the commander of the *San Carlos* reportedly went insane and was sent back to San

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[57] Ibid., 18-20.

[58] A highly optimistic goal, 65 degrees north is approximately the latitude of modern day Nome on the Chukchi Sea which would have required navigating around the Alaska Peninsula and into the Bering Sea. Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 71-72.

Blas aboard a launch. Ayala, commander of the *Sonora* was appointed captain of the *San Carlos* and Bodega Y Quadra was promoted to command the *Sonora*.[59]

After a relatively uneventful voyage north, one of the most dramatic events of the Spanish expedition of 1775 occurred four months after departure while on the coast of what is now Washington State. On July 13 the *Sonora* was anchored in the mouth of what is thought to be the modern Quinault River where they found themselves surrounded by shoals that could not be navigated before high tide. In the meantime canoes of Indians came from shore to meet them and the inevitable trading ensued. Bodega Y Quadra's journal notes the friendliness of the natives, and in light of their temperament he thought it reasonably secure to send a shore party to replenish the water supply. Bodega Y Quadra nevertheless took defensive measures: "I sent , armed and with all precautions, 6 men of prudence and skill whom I choose for such tasks, each one taking his musket, Cutlass, and some taking two pistols, in charge of this duty being Boatswain Pedro Sardano, known among all those of his rank for his good conduct and courage." [60] The shore party struggled to land their launch in heavy surf and then, as they made their way ashore a large number of Indians spilled out of the surrounding woods and swiftly fell on the entire complement.[61] Bodega Y Quadra could only watch

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[59] Ibid., 71-72.

[60]Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra*, 26-27.

[61] Bodega Y Quadra writes in his journal that two of his men were seen trying to escape by swimming away from the beach, Mourelle's account was identical to Bodega Y Quadra's except for this point.

helplessly.[62] Once high tide allowed navigation Bodega Y Quadra began searching for survivors of the attack when more canoes of Indians approached the *Sonora*. Now dangerously low in manpower (Bodega describes five of his remaining crew as sick) the Indians attempted to board the *Sonora* at the bow where Bodega had the fewest crew. He fired on them with both swivel guns and muskets, killing at least six. Reunited with the Frigate *Santiago* later that day, Bodega requested thirty men to press an attack on the Indians, but a council of the officers decided against any action. [63]

Heceta replaced the lost crew of the *Sonora* with men from the *Santiago* and the expedition continued north, but on July 19th Juan Perez, second in command recommended in writing to Heceta that the squadron return home, citing at least 29 men now ill and the "general lateness of the season".[64] On July 29th Heceta announced to the officers that they would start for home. That same night Bodega Y Quadra and Mourelle intentionally slipped away from the larger frigate to continue exploring to the north.[65] The two ships would not meet again until early October in Monterey Bay, Alta California.

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[62] *Various interpretations have been submitted for the Indian attack in 1775, see*: Pauline Capoeman, ed., *Land of the Quinault* (Tahola: Quinault Indian Nation, 1990), 49; Delbert McBride, "Viewpoints and Visions in 1792," *Columbia*, no. Summer (1992), 21-27.

[63] Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra*, 28.

[64] Herbert K. Beals, *For Honor and Country: The Diary of Bruno de Hezeta* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1985), 79-82; The sickness described fits the symptoms of scurvy, see Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, *Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), 297-298.

[65] Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra*, 32.

The accomplishments of Bodega Y Quadra and Mourelle after parting company with Heceta and the *Santiago* exceeded those of the flagship in most respects. After following a northwest course for two weeks the Spaniards sighted land on August 16, an island "with great bays and several high mountains."[66] Scouting the coast the Spaniards anchored in a small sheltered bay protected on three sides at latitude 57 degrees 20 minutes north and longitude 34 degrees 12 minutes west (of San Blas). [67] Bodega Y Quadra named the harbor Remedios and went ashore the same day (with 14 well armed crew) to perform an act of sovereignty.[68] After several nervous encounters with the local native inhabitants the Spaniards struck out from Remedios Bay again to the Northwest, where contrary winds finally turned them back after they reached an observed 57 degrees 58 minutes North latitude. [69]

On the 24th of August the *Sonora* entered a great bay that Quadra later named for Viceroy Bucareli (the name it retains to this day). Here Quadra (who was now too sick to go ashore) sent his second in command Mourelle and a detachment of men to make the second Spanish act of possession of the voyage.[70] After a brief rest and refreshing their

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Latitude was based on sextant observation, longitude was determined by log and dead-reckoning, Bodega Y Quadra and Mourelle's accurate chart of the bay leave no doubt that it is modern-day Sea Lion Cove on Krusov Island about 25 miles Northwest of modern Sitka. Ibid., 45-46.

[68] This is the first place in present day Alaska to be claimed by Spain as well as the highest land latitude reached at that point. see: Olson, *Through Spanish eyes : the Spanish voyages to Alaska, 1774-1792*, 46.

[70] Bucareli Bay (or Bucareli Sound) lies between modern Baker Island and Sumez Island near Prince of Wales Island in the Alexander Archipelago.

water supply the Spaniards now reconnoitered southward discovering more minor islands until the winds shifted and Quadra decided once more to attempt sailing north to 60 degrees. It was a gamble characteristic of the bold Quadra and when the winds shifted the *Sonora* was forced to tack until the first day of September desperately clawing away from the coast.[71] Half of the crew now showed signs of scurvy; even Mourelle and Quadra began to exhibit symptoms. Quadra observed: "Finding myself with people struck with this contagious illness without medicines for them and exposed it having it spread to others, as it was impossible to keep them separated, I realized that, however much I might force myself, reaching a higher latitude would be out of the question. One could even doubt whether we could return should the winds grow stronger without people to work the ship."[72] Bodega Y Quadra and Mourelle's seamanship could achieve 58 degrees latitude north in the *Sonora* but finally, storm-tossed and weak with scurvy the *Sonora* and crew limped south for the next three weeks.[73]

On October 7th, the *Sonora* emerged from the fog into Monterey Bay to be greeted by the crews of both the *Santiago* and the *San Carlos*. All of the *Sonora's* crew were so weak from scurvy that they were incapable of walking, but remarkably all survived; in fact the crew had remained intact since the Indian attack at the Quinault

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[71] Abandoning the Flagship *Santiago* was insubordinate and it is clear from reports that this was overlooked in view of the *Sonora's* accomplishments which in the end exceeded those of the *Santiago*. Quadra's risk-taking may in part have been secured by the technicality that he was of equal rank to the overall commanding officer of the combined expedition.

[72] Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra*, 37-38.

[73] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 81-85.

River.[74] The Heceta expedition of 1775 was by any measure a notable success. With limited material resources a group of young Spanish officers had explored and claimed more new territory for Spain than any effort since the 16th century. Heceta's (and Perez's) prudence and caution had been balanced by Quadra's and Mourelle's boldness and courage. The observations and journals of the expedition would be translated into sailing-directions and maps that would serve the Spanish navy (and ironically the English Royal Navy as well) for the next 20 years. Not encountering Russians in the course of the journey was probably seen as more of a success by Madrid than if they had been found, and for the moment Minister of the Indies Gálvez might have been excused for briefly breathing easier.

VII. Drake's Legacy

English interest in the Pacific Ocean and Northwest Coast of America was persistent and known to both the courts of Spain and Russia. Plans for what would be the third Cook expedition to the Pacific did not escape observation by Spanish sources in England. Viceroy Bucareli was apprised by royal order in March of 1776 and given instructions to detain the British if they should land in California.[75] Bucareli was already planning another Spanish naval expedition that would expand on the discoveries of the 1775 voyage, but the naval division of New Spain in San Blas remained ill equipped and beset

[74] Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra*, 40.

[75] Chapman, *The founding of Spanish California: the northwestward expansion of New Spain 1687-1783*, 376.

with delays.[76] It would be almost three years before Spain could organize the ships, men and provisions for the next expedition to the north coast and on its departure February 11, 1779, neither the Viceroy of New Spain nor his captains could have known that Cook (Figure 1.7) had already surveyed the Spanish claimed north coast and beyond in detail surpassing the capabilities of the naval division of San Blas.[77]

Figure 1.7. Captain James Cook, ca. 1776. Source: Painting by John Webber, 1776, Museum of New Zealand Tepapa Tongarewa, Wellington.

The third Cook expedition had its root in a renewed British interest in the possibility of a northern saltwater passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Attempts at

[76] Quadra, *Bodega's Narrative*, 1-6.

[77] The Spanish expedition of 1779 with Bodega Y Quadra now in command of one of two frigates, left San Blas only a few days before Captain Cook met his death at the hands of indigenous Hawaiians in Hawaii, this after following the Spanish route the previous summer up the northwest coast and pressing on further north to what is now called Cook Inlet in Alaska. See: David Samwell, "Some Accounts of a Voyage to South Sea's in 1776-1777-1778," in *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery, vol. III, pt. 2*, ed. J.C. Beaglehole (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 1194-1201.

finding a northwest passage from the Atlantic began as early as 1497 with John Cabot. After more than 200 years of failed attempts, the search in the 18th century found the support of King George II and became an enterprise of the Royal Navy with the Christopher Middleton expedition of 1741.[78] Middleton did not find a route to the Pacific from the east.[79] In the same year as the Middleton Expedition, the Russian voyage of two ships under the command of Danish Captain Vitus Bering sailed east from Kamchatka in search of land. The observations of the Russian explorers were distilled into several books and maps. One of these maps (probably the most wildly inaccurate of them) was included in a book *An Account of the New Northern Archipelago, lately discovered by the Russians in the Seas of Kamtschatka and Anadir* by Jacob von Stahlin, the Secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Stahlin book, published in 1774 was translated into English and made its way to London before the end of 1775.[80]

A few years earlier in 1771, Samuel Hearne of the Hudson Bay Company traveled extensively in the deep interior of Canada west of Hudson's Bay searching for an Indian Copper mine. Hearne's journey led him to the shores of the Arctic Ocean; he was the first European to do so. Hearne's observations confirmed that there was no water route to the

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[78] R.N. Cpt. James Cook, *The journals of captain James Cook on his voyages of discovery, Vol. III Part 1*, ed. J.C. Beaglehole (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), xxxiii-xxxix.

[79] But Middleton did make relatively accurate Longitude measurements while at Ft. Churchill on Hudson Bay using the Galilean method, a telescope and a watch. J.B. Hewson, *A History of the Practice of Navigation* (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1963), 229.

[80] Cpt. James Cook, *The journals of captain James Cook on his voyages of discovery, Vol. III Part 1*, lxi-lxiv.

Pacific Ocean south of 65 degrees latitude, but his report of the unknown sea at the end of the Coppermine River was open to interpretation.[81] It is thought that a combination of evidence (no matter how thin) including the Russian accounts in the Stahlin book, the anecdotal evidence of Hearne in Canada and the still mistaken theory that seawater did not freeze induced the British Admiralty into forming a new expedition to the North Pacific with Britain's greatest explorer James Cook in command.[82]

Cook sailed from Plymouth in July 1776 aboard the HMS *Resolution*, and after rendezvousing in Cape Town with the second ship of the squadron, the HMS *Discovery*, the expedition proceeded to the South Pacific reaching Waimeia Hawaii in January 1778. Cook carried secret instructions from the Admiralty that contained one remarkably deferential paragraph regarding Spain:

> You are also, in your way thither, strictly enjoined not to touch upon any part of the Spanish dominions on the Western Continent of America, unless driven there by some unavoidable accident; in which case you are to stay no longer there than shall be absolutely necessary, and to be very careful not to give any umbrage or offence to any of the inhabitants or subjects of his Catholic Majesty. And if, in your farther progress to the Northward, as hereafter directed you may find any subjects of any European Prince or State upon any part of the coast

[81] *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, s.v. "Samuel Hearne," http://www.biographi.ca (accessed October 12 , 2011).

[82] Cpt. James Cook, *The journals of captain James Cook on his voyages of discovery, Vol. III Part 1*, lxv.

> you may think proper to visit, you are not to disturb them, or give them any just cause of offense, but, on the contrary to treat them with civility and friendship.[83]

These conciliatory instructions from the English admiralty would have, of course been unknown in Madrid. When Madrid's agents and observers in England reported on the preparations for the third Cook voyage to the Pacific, Minister of the Indies José de Gálvez may have briefly thought he was back in Sonora in the winter 1770, his most paranoid fears had been exceeded for now it was not only the "Muscovites" but Spain's most implacable "enemy," England, invading the Spanish Alta California and Northwest Coast of America.[84]

In many respects it was a far worse development than anything that Gálvez' active imagination might conjure. The Cook expedition from the English Admiralty's perspective was a natural expansion on the ancient claims of Drake to the Northwest Coast. Cook would proceed well beyond the previous Spanish voyages, systematically mapping and naming the Northwest Coast in English. All the while Cook's most reliable sailing guide (in his own words) was an English translated copy of the Spaniard Mourelle's journal that

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[83] Grenfell Price, *The Explorations of Captain James Cook in the Pacific as Told by Selections of His Own Journals* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), 202.

[84] In official Spanish correspondence of the 18th century England was often referred to simply as the "enemy"

had surreptitiously made its way to London after the Heceta-Bodega expedition of 1775.[85] In Madrid's (Galvez's) view, the unassailable Spanish sovereign claims to the Northwest Coast were now threatened from two directions, and while the unexpected Russian advances still seemed tentative, the English activities loomed far more threatening.

[85] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 85-86.

CHAPTER 2: The Philosopher Captain: Child of the Enlightenment

I. From Tuscany to Madrid

The government of the Spanish Empire of Charles III was a reflection of the men employed by the king, and in many ways the greatest of his reforms was his willingness to exercise diversity in the choice of his men.[1] Spain in the 18th century was a truly global empire which even in Europe was not confined to the Iberian Peninsula. Through the latter part of the early-modern era most of what is today Italy was the dominion of either Spain or the Holy Roman Empire. The kingdoms of Sicily, Naples and the Duchy of Milan and Parma were all at one time possessions of Spain. The latter was the familial home of Alessandro Malaspina (figure 2.1). Malaspina's origins were privileged; he was the second son of an unlanded but titled noble family with blood ties to the viceroyalty of Sicily.[2]

The ancient Clementine College (figure 2.3) originally located near the *Ponte Cavour* bridge over the river Tiber in Rome was created by Pope Clement VIII in 1595, as a hospice for Slavonian refugees fleeing the Ottoman Turkish invasion. In the 17th century Pope Urban VIII in turn converted 'Clementino' into an exclusive school for

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[1] Early in Charles III's reign he encountered resistance to a balance of ministers and advisors with Italian origin, while it was natural that he brought many of his most trusted advisors with him from Sicily, he later began employing a mix of more diverse origin. Malaspina, a Tuscan, would not have been out of place in the court of the former king of Sicily. John Lynch, *Bourbon Spain* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 251-253.

[2] John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 8.

teaching Catholic elites, graduating future Cardinals, Court Ministers and more than one mathematician.[3] In 1771 a thesis published by a 16 year old pupil of Clementine College entitled *Theses ex Phisica Generali* explored a wide range of concepts and approaches representative of thought in the Age of Enlightenment.

Figure 2.1. Alessandro Malaspina ca. 1791. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

The author, in the introductory section, emphasized the connection between the physical world and philosophy, a connection that he argued was necessary for the investigation of nature and the explanation of its causes. One hundred thirty seven years earlier, a short distance from Clementine College (on the other side of the Tiber) had been the site of the heresy trial for astronomer Galileo Galilei, who was accused of

[3] Pope Urban VIII was responsible for summoning Galileo to Rome to face trial for heresy in 1633 as well as a 1624 papal bull that made the use of tobacco in holy places punishable by excommunication. See: Dava Sobel, *Galileo's Daughter* (New York: Penguin, 2000); Iain Gately, *Tobacco* (New York: Grove Press, 2001).

promoting the idea of heliocentrism. That enlightenment thinking had become a part of the curriculum of a school such as Clementine College in the mid 18th century was a reflection of the liberalization of thought that was taking place in both Protestant and Catholic Europe. The author of *Theses ex Phisica Generali* was a young Parmesan of minor noble birth named Alessandro Malaspina.[4]

Malaspina was born near Mulazzo in the Duchy of Parma, Tuscany in 1754 (figure 2.2.), the second son of the Marquis Carlo Morello (a noble title of limited property typical of the region and era) and Caterina Meli Lupi di Soragna.[5]

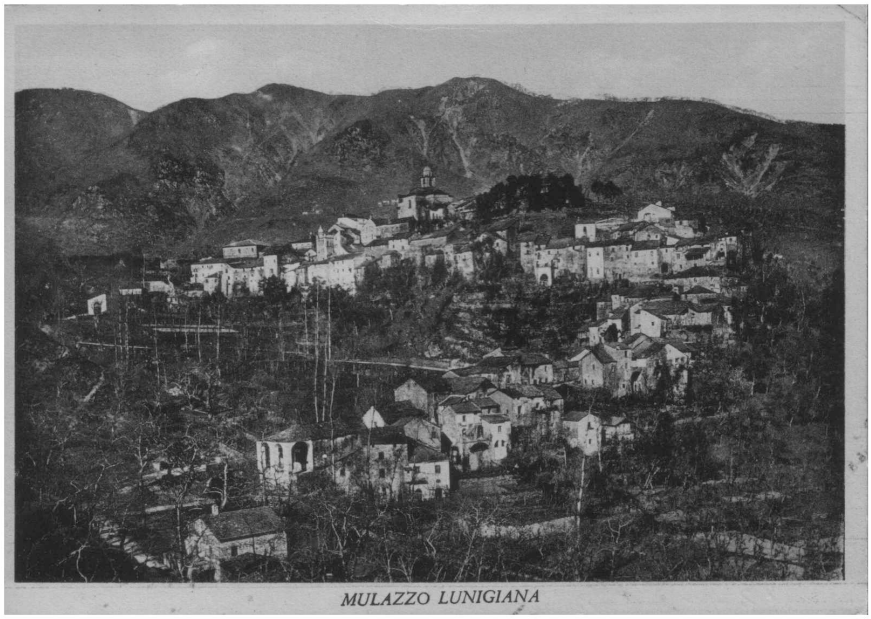

Figure 2.2. Mulazzo, Tuscany, Italy, ancestral home of Alessandro Malaspina. Source: Centro di Studi Malaspiniani, Mulazzo, Italy.

[4] Ibid., 10.

[5] Dario Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*, ed. Trans., Don S Kirschner, and Teresa J Kirschner, *English* (Nanaimo: Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre, 2001), 14.

In 1754 the Dutchy of Parma was a fiefdom of the Austrian dominated Holy Roman Empire. The political fortunes of Tuscany and much of the Italian peninsula would shift in the intervening eight years, and by 1762 Alessandro Malaspina and his immediate family were living in the Palermo estate of his great-uncle Giovanni Fogliani Szorza d'Aragona, who served as the viceroy of Sicily under Charles III of Spain, who by this time was the master of most of Italy. [6]

Figure 2.3. Clementine College, Rome, in the 18th Century. Source: Original engraving by Giuseppe Vasi, http://www.infolio.it/romanel700/gvasi/libri/09collegi/collegi08.htm.

After completing his studies at Clementine College in 1773, Malaspina was accepted into the Order of Malta.[7] Membership in martial -- religious orders such as the Order of Malta was a crucial step in a young noblemen's advancement in the Spanish Empire of the early modern era. The path of Malaspina's progress is not clearly

[6] Ibid. 15-16; Donald Cutter, "Introduction," in *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, The Journal of the Voyage of Alejandro Malaspina, Volume 1*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2004), xxxi.

[7] Membership required a "patent of nobility" for all four of a candidate's grandparents. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 12-13.

documented, but sources place him in Malta in 1774 and possibly going to sea on a Maltese vessel attached to the Order of Malta where he may have learned the basics of seamanship.[8] Only a year later Malaspina entered the *Marina Real*, the Spanish Royal Navy, as a cadet. Malaspina was almost immediately assigned to sea duty with an officer's commission of *alférez de fragata*.[9] Regardless of Malaspina's abilities and intellect, such rapid advancement demonstrates patronage from above.[10] The consequences of being a second son of noble birth during this time frame are not to be discounted. The strength of the family hierarchy in all levels of society and commerce was profound throughout Europe in the early modern era. In the Spanish world the sheer number of landless second sons led to the formation of quasi-fraternal organizations known as *Collegio Mayores* that were originally meant to be societies to aid impoverished university students (and they received royal money to do so). The *Collegio Mayores* became potent forces wielding influence behind the scenes to the degree that they threatened traditional establishments and were finally suppressed. [11]

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[8] Ibid. 13; Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*, 18.

[9] A rank roughly equivalent to a junior grade lieutenant or ensign in modern terms. Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), xx.

[10]Both Manfredi and Kendrick seem to agree that Malaspina's Patron was none other than Minister of the Marine Valdes, identified as a member of the same order of St. John/Malta as Malaspina. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 21.

[11] It is always an interesting exercise in any historical situation from this period to parse the characters into first-born and non first-born categories. For a brief description of the Collegios Mayores see: Richard Herr, *The Eighteenth-Century Revolution in Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 25; Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 286-287.

Malaspina's career in the *Marina Real* was active and distinguished. Spain became allied with France and the Netherlands against England in the American Revolutionary War from 1779-1783.[12] This was an ideal era for a young and ambitious naval officer in that it offered many opportunities for advancement, and Malaspina served in several campaigns (figure 2.4).[13] He also sailed to the Pacific as far as the Philippines, and in a foreshadowing of events in his later life, Malaspina's liberal philosophy led him into problems on at least one occasion when he was accused of heresy in 1782. While the charges were forwarded to the Inquisition, they were never upheld and he soon returned to active service.[14] Malaspina went on to serve in the Spanish naval assault on Gibraltar in 1782, and in 1783-1784 he returned to the Pacific Ocean now as second-in-command. In 1785 Malaspina was employed by Spain's Naval Hydrography division surveying the Spanish coast, and afterwards undertook a circumnavigation of the world between 1786 and 1788, now commanding the Spanish frigate *Astrea* which had been seconded to the service of the Spanish Royal Philippine Company.[15]

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[12] One of Spain's main motivations was recovering Gibralter from the English, a campaign in which Malaspina served and Spain failed. Ibid., 320-321.

[13] Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*, 19-20.

[14] He had been identified to the inquisition after arguing with a priest at sea about the possibility of reincarnation. Although the Inquisition had lost much of its potency in the Bourbon era Malaspinas good fortune in sidestepping the charges is further evidence of powerful patronage. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 22; Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*, 20-21.

[15] Cutter, "Introduction," xxxii.

II. An Enlightened Proposal

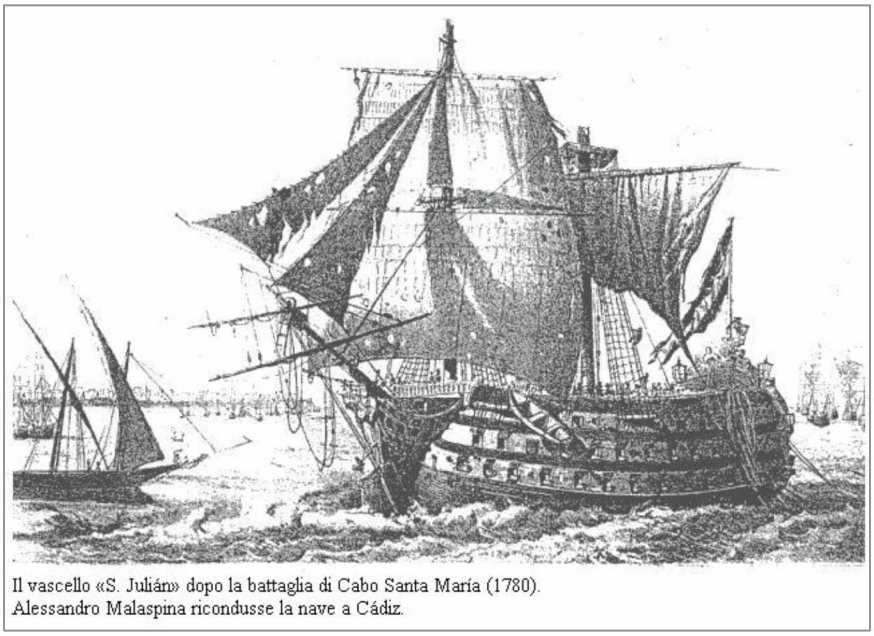

Figure 2.4. The Spanish vessel San Julián after the battle of Cape St. Vincent (1780), Alexandro Malaspina, is credited in this engraving with returning the ship to Cádiz, modern sources claim he was transferred to Gibraltar after the ship was captured.
Source: http://web.viu.ca/black/amrc/index.htm?Gallery/vessels.htm&2.

On returning from the Astrea voyage to the Pacific, Malaspina (in partnership with Jose de Bustamante y Guerra, first officer of his most recent cruise) first submitted a proposal to the naval ministry for a two ship expedition that would survey most of Spain's ultramarine (overseas) possessions in both America and the Pacific Basin.[16] The plan that Malaspina submitted was named *viaje científico y político alrededor del mundo* or A Plan for a Scientific and Political Voyage Around the World. It was breathtakingly ambitious and curiously, an homage to the celebrated naval commander of Spain's

[16] Donald Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991), 5.

greatest enemy, explorer Captain James Cook of the English royal navy.[17] Malaspina clearly hoped to exceed Cook's achievements and thereby demonstrate Spain's renewed naval prowess and technical accomplishment. Cook's voyages had produced a three-volume report; Malaspina planned in advance to produce eight-volumes.[18]

Malaspina's proposal for his scientific and political voyage was remarkable in both its form and content. A brief document (less than 5 pages written in the form of a letter), it begins by acknowledging the expeditions of both LePerouse (France) and Cook (England) and framing the proposal in terms of a challenge: "For the past twenty years two nations, the English and the French, in noble competition, have undertaken voyages of this sort in which navigation, geography and humanity itself have made very rapid progress. The history of human society has thus been founded on much wider research; natural history has been enriched with almost endless discoveries. . ."[19] Malaspina elaborated in the next paragraph on the dual purpose of the Spanish proposal:

> The proposed voyage would aim to accomplish these objectives, and this part, which can be termed the scientific aspect, would certainly be undertaken following earnestly in the wake of Cook and La Perouse. But a voyage undertaken by Spanish navigators must necessarily involve two other objectives. One is

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[17] Malaspina's writings throughout his journals of the voyage display his great admiration for Cook, another indication of both Malaspina's free thinking and the esteem for the great English mariner held even by England's greatest naval rivals.

[18] Cutter, "Introduction," xxxiii.

[19] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I.* Appendix I, 312-313.

> making of Hydrographic charts covering the most remote regions of America and the compilation of sailing directions capable of providing safe guidance to inexperienced merchant mariners. The other is the investigation of the political status of America both in relation to Spain and to other European nations.[20]

It was clear from the outset that the "political component" of the voyage was given equal (or greater) weight to the scientific component. The lines between science and government blurred further when considering the relationships between state cartography/hydrography and the imperial project during this era. State made maps most often supported State ideas of the world beyond the court, as Raymond B. Craib wrote: "More bluntly, they are implicated in creating the reality that they presume to reveal." [21] The brevity of the proposal also suggests that the expedition may have been, in effect preapproved. Malaspina evidently enjoyed direct access to King Charles III. On more than one occasion (and well before the expedition) he extraordinarily requested leave to travel to the royal court in Madrid.[22] The time frame of the expedition proposal's submission was during the final months of the king's reign, and its approval may have been one of the last orders that Charles III made before his death.[23] Within ten years of

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[20] Ibid. Appendix I, 312-313.

[21] B. Craib, "Cartography and power in the conquest and creation of new Spain," *Review Literature And Arts Of The Americas* 35, no. 1 (2010): 17.

[22] This was not standard procedure for a young naval officer, and his requests were always approved. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 23, 26.

[23] Kendrick raises the question whether Malaspina's proposal was ever even seen by the King. The Plan for a Scientific and Political Voyage Around the World was submitted in correspondence to Antonio Valdez Y Bazan Minister of the Royal Navy in September 1788, Charles III King of Spain died in Madrid in

joining the Spanish navy, Malaspina had risen to the rank of *Capitan de Fragata* and also had made enough of an impression on the court of Charles III (or Charles himself) that Malaspina was given broad (if not unprecedented) latitude and resources for the planning, organization and command of a state voyage on a scale not seen since the time of the Hapsburgs. [24]

Malaspina's proposal framed the political portion of the voyage in terms of a reconnaissance. A voyage to collect and organize information, even political information fit well with the principles of Malaspina's enlightenment intellectual background. However, evidence suggests that Malaspina had formed many of his political views regarding Spain and its possessions before a single board had been nailed in the hulls of the expedition's two custom made ships.[25] Malaspina was known to associate with fellow *illustrados* and was by any measure reform minded.[26] Malaspina's vision of a new and different Spanish empire may have resonated with Charles III, who was probably the most reform minded Spanish monarch since the reconquista, and his vision certainly must have resonated with Minister of the Navy Antonio Valdes (figure 2.5).[27]

December 1788, see: Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I.* 311-315. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 36.

[24] A rank roughly equivalent to a modern naval Commander.

[25] In personal correspondence before the voyage Malaspina made references to a series of *Axiomas Politicos* which was curiously the same title of a thesis he submitted after the voyage. Ibid., 102-103.

[26] Enlightenment thinkers in Spain were called "Illustrados" which literally translates to "an enlightened one" Ibid., 18-19.

[27] Antonio Valdes, Minister of the navy (figure 2.5) seems the most likely candidate as Malaspina's highly placed patron in the court of Charles III. Cutter, "Introduction." XXXV. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 13, 26.

Figure 2.5. Antonio Valdes, Minister of the Royal Spanish Navy.
Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

Malaspina's writings reveal however, that above all else, he was a proud and loyal Spanish officer. Many in Spain in this same era were aware of how Spain's reputation had suffered in the eyes of the rest of Europe since the Hapsburg era and the challenge this posed for any program of modernization.[28] Whether anyone in the court of Charles III conceived of Malaspina's proposal as an effort at public relations in any modern sense is difficult to assess, Malaspina certainly seems to believe that Spain had a future potential that fit within his liberal political philosophy and that the voyage would serve that end.

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[28] Spain's "public relations" problem is explored in: Charles Gibson, *The black legend; anti-Spanish attitudes in the Old World and the New*. (New York: Knopf, 1971); William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1971).

III. The Discovery and the Daring

The plan for the expedition, submitted in September 1788 was rapidly approved : "Your project for sailing around the world has merited the King's approval in the terms proposed by your Honour in your letter of 10 September instant. It is His Majesty' pleasure that the project should be carried out to good effect and to this end that you should be relieved from taking up your appointment to the Midshipmen's College in the Department of Cadiz."[29] Malaspina was given virtual *carte blanche* in his preparations. In comparison to the Cook expeditions that Malaspina so much admired, the preparations could in fact have been called extravagant. [30] Malaspina asked for and received two purpose-built ships. The "*Corbetas*" or "Corvettes" were small frigates (figure 2.6) that sacrificed weaponry for cargo space and sailing qualities. The ships, later christened the *Descobierta* and the *Atreveida* still carried more than 20 canons each (and in fact sailed with 24, with 6 in each ship stored in the hold). The two identical vessels were 33.3 meters (109 feet) long with a beam of 8.7 meters (29 feet), a depth of hold of 4.3 meters (14 ft), and a tonnage of 306 *toneladas*.[31] The ship's names, *Descubierta* and

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[29] Ministro de Marina, Antonio Valdes y Bazan to Malaspina, 14 October 1788. Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I.* Appendix I, 315.

[30] Cutter remarks that the custom built ships (a model of the *Atrevida* built from the original plans is seen in figure 2.6) for the Malaspina expedition was one of its greatest advantages over all previous European expeditions to the Pacific. Cutter, "Introduction," XXXV-XXXVI.

[31] Tonnelada is a Spanish measurement unit for describing a ships displacement , not precisely equal to the English ton. Lincoln P. Paine, *Ships of Discovery and Exploration* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 2000), 37–38.

Atrevida, were another nod to Cook and his ships *Discovery* and *Resolution*, and they were launched together on April 8, 1789. [32]

Figure 2.6. The Spanish Corvette "Atrevida", a model of the hull. Source: Maritime Museum of British Columbia, Victoria, BC, Canada.

The initial plan for the expedition was to sail from Spain to the South Atlantic coast of what is now South America; survey the coasts of South America around Cape Horn up the Pacific Coast as far as *Acapulco* or *San Blas*; cross the Pacific to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii); proceed to what is now New Zealand and Eastern Australia; sail on to the Philippines, Indonesia and Guam, and then north to Kamchatka, and return to Nova Espana and then back to Spain via the outbound route.[33] A circumnavigation was originally considered, but in the end the potential for encountering hostile navies in the Indian Ocean and around Africa along with the logistical challenge of such a route was decided to be too risky.[34]

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[32] In literal translation from Spanish, *Descubierta*: Discovery and *Atrevida*: Daring.

[33] Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume III*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: Hakluyt Soc., 2004). Appendix I, 315-316.

[34] The decision to avoid the Cape Hope route may have also been influenced by the sensitive and valued nature of the information the ships would be carrying by the return stage of the voyage. Passage through the Cape of Good Hope route was also long considered by Spain as a Portuguese controlled waterway and in

Malaspina's choice for the complement of the two ships was astoundingly diverse (although he seemed to prefer men from the north of Spain, perhaps in consideration of the climate they might encounter on the trip).[35] Along with the *crème de la crème* of the current Spanish cartographers including Dionisio Alcala Galliano and Felipe Bauza, each ship was assigned several artists and naturalists.[36] French naturalist Luis Nee was assigned to the *Atrevida*. Antonio Pineda, a Spanish Army officer, was assigned similar duties aboard the *Descubierta*. These two men formed a team with Bohemian botanist Tadeo Haenke, although Haenke missed the departure and traveled to South America by another ship, and after shipwreck and rescue only rendezvoused with the expedition in Santiago, Chile.[37] The expedition assigned artists to both ships; several of the scientists also contributed illustrations throughout the voyage. One of the artists who shipped from Cadiz, Jose Guio took passage only to Acapulco where he was replaced by perhaps the expedition's most famous artist, Tomas Suria of the Mexico Academy.

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the time frame of the voyage Portugal was allied with England. Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792*, 7-8.

[35] Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 40.

[36] Felipe Bauza y Canas worked together with Malaspina when the latter was seconded to a hydrographic survey of Spain's coasts in 1785. Bauza would some years later flee Spain to avoid serving Napoleon, and has been credited with preserving some material from the original expedition. Ursula Lamb, "The London Years of Felipe Bauzá: Spanish Hydrographer in Exile, 1823–34," *Journal of Navigation* 34 (1981): 319-340.

[37] Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 41.

IV. The Changing Tide

The ships and crew of the expedition were equipped and prepared for the 18th century equivalent of a 20th century voyage to the moon. However, none of Malaspina's research and planning could prepare the ships, crew and himself for the stormy seas that were brewing on shore between the capitals of Paris, Madrid and London. Most significantly, King Charles III of Spain died in December 1788, only weeks after the approval of Malaspina's expedition. The impact of his death and the succession of his second son Charles IV (figure 2.7) on the future of Spain in general and the fate of Malaspina in particular was immense.[38]

It is difficult to imagine that anyone could have been prepared for what the next 10 years would hold in store for Spain, but Malaspina seems to have been in a particularly fragile position of which he never revealed cognizance. Because the expedition was at sea for virtually all of the turbulent first four years of Charles IV's reign, it is likely that Malaspina was operating in an information vacuum, but the fact that King Charles III died more than 6 months before the expedition sailed raises several questions about Malaspina's comportment and written words after the expedition had left Spain that give no hint that there had been a change in regime and that the new king might not be at all like the old king. Inexplicably there is no hint of trepidation in his communications and written thoughts, when in fact the Spanish universe upon which Malaspina had hung his star had changed irreversibly and not for the better.

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[38] Charles III' eldest son suffered from severe developmental disabilities and was passed over in favor of second son Charles IV (figure 2.7).

Malaspina's political philosophy is inseparable from his character and his story. The conception and planning for the expedition and the final chapters in Malaspina's service to Spain are directly related to a political philosophy that on examination reveals both internal and external contradiction.

Figure 2.7. Charles IV, son of Charles III and successor to the throne of Spain, 1789. Source: Original painting by Goya, Prado Museum, Madrid.

Malaspina has been described as traveling in an elite circle of progressive thinkers in Spain, but the record reveals that after arriving in Spain in 1774 as a naval cadet Malaspina would spend the balance of the time until the voyage of 1789 either at sea or in Cadiz, presumably isolated from philosophical and political discourse. One could surmise that Malaspina arrived at his political philosophy internally, through personal reading on his off duty time (which might indeed have been extensive in the circumnavigation of the globe by square rigged sailing ship), but Manfredi goes to lengths to point out that Malaspina was in the company of a cadre of *Illustrados* in Cadiz

that socially surrounded a community of prominent Italo-Spaniards.[39] Malaspina's internal philosophical discourse, (regardless of its soundness), and his independence of thought and autonomy of action can be seen to stamp his character with a certain degree of imperiousness or arrogance. That is, he could be seen in figurative terms as *voyaging* to seek confirmation rather than new knowledge.[40] Kendrick submits that one of the key products of Malaspina's 'political reconnaissance' his *Political Axioms* that are dated as having been written on the return leg of the voyage may have actually existed in some form before the voyage began in 1789.[41]

This is not to say that Malaspina's ideas regarding Spain's possessions and power in the Pacific were not valid or lacked merit, but it raises the possibility that he sidestepped some of the fundamental precepts of process and analysis of the enlightenment thinking with which his character has been so closely identified. Malaspina's remedy for the puzzle of the administration and structure of the Spanish empire was (predominantly) a distillation of the ideas of two sources: English author Adam Smith and the Spanish jurist Pedro Rodrigues de Campomanes. In both the *Introduccion* to the journal of the expedition and in his *Axiomas politicos sobre la*

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[39] Malaspina is believed to be a Mason, and possibly a deist, fitting well with the importance of his membership in the Order of St. John. Manfredi, *Alessandro Malaspina, A Biography*, 18-19.

[40] Even though the confirmations might be true this process is counter to (if not the inverse) of an empiricist enlightenment approach. This principle is explored in depth in: Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

[41] There is a reference to his Axiomas Politicos in correspondence before the expedition set sail but no document has been uncovered. On return to Spain the court of Charles IV repeatedly requested for a dossier in the format of raw data on the political investigations of the voyage but Malaspina resisted and submitted his Axioms, see concluding chapter. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 102.

America, Malaspina waded into economic theory in identifying the Spanish concentration on precious metal mining and the direct royal restrictions and controls on those products as a fundamental source of the Empire's economic woes. He went on to propose nothing less than a Hispano-American commonwealth that ideally would have eliminated the expense of managing so closely the colonial possessions of the Americas, while promoting the type of maritime trade in which England had been so successful (and Spain seemed confined to observe helplessly).[42]

Malaspina's vision of a new Spanish world order was as spectacular in its liberality as in its naiveté. He was suggesting nothing less than freeing all of Spanish America from the crown at a time when Spain was not only as economically dependent on revenues from the viceroyalties as ever, but also at a time when Nueva Espana was experiencing a dizzying expansion in productivity.[43] Nueva Espana had surpassed the viceroyalty of Peru in revenues in the late 17th century (revenues in both viceroyalties were primarily based on precious metal production).[44] Silver production in Nueva Espana increased throughout the 18th century and as a result Nuevo Espana's economy grew at a rate surpassing that of almost any economy in the world.[45] Reform for colonial Spain in the late 18th century usually took the form of an imperial -- minded *Visitador (*such as

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[42] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, lxxxix-xci.

[43] R. Dobado and G. Marrero, *Mining-led growth in Bourbon Mexico, the role of the state, and the economic cost of independence* (David Rockefeller Ctr, 2006), 3-6.

[44] H.S. Klein, "The Great Shift: the rise of Mexico and the Decline of Peru in the Spanish American Colonial Empire, 1680–1809," *Revista de Historia Económica (Second Series)* 13, no. 1 (1995): 37-40.

[45] Dobado and Marrero, *Mining-led growth in Bourbon Mexico, the role of the state, and the economic cost of independence*, 5-8.

José de Gálvez) who would install *intendants* in troublesome districts to improve mining yields and steer the Imperial account ledgers back into the black (or if necessary personally lead the suppression of rebellious colonials). Spain's very survival relied on Mexican silver.

It is also not clear whether Malaspina appreciated the class dynamics at play in most of colonial Spain at the time he proposed the expedition. Malaspina had difficulty delineating the class differences and the central import they had on the issues and governance of the Spanish American colonies. By the 18th century (although it had certainly been a feature of the Spanish Imperial project from its inception) colonial Spanish America was seething with class division. *Gachupines* and *Peninsulares* were both of Spanish birth or origin, but the *Gachupines* were immigrants while the *Peninsulares* were temporary residents usually serving in official capacities. *Criollos* were of Spanish blood but born in the American colonies. *Meztizos* were mixed Spanish-Indian blood (figure 2.8). Occupying the bottom rung of society and class structure were full blooded Indians and African slaves.[46] One of *Visitador* Galvez's personal convictions was to bar *Criollos* from positions in colonial government. He found *Criollos* dangerously divided in loyalty between local interests and those of the Crown, and his solution was their complete prohibition.[47]

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[46] H. I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-General of New Spain, 1765-1771* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1916), 50.

[47] Ibid., 50-53.

Figure 2.8. El Mestizaje (the Mestiza) by Miguel Mateo Maldonado y Cabrera (1695–1768). Cabrera, considered the greatest painter in Nuevo Espana was himself a Zapotec Mestizo. Source: Museo de América, Madrid.

Once reaching Nuevo Espana Malaspina and Bustamante would have direct exposure to an excellent example of the Spanish policy of discriminating against *Criollos* in the person of Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, a *Criollo* from Peru who as an officer in the Spanish navy (and coincidentally a graduate of the same academy where Malaspina had served on staff) had conducted several of the most important Spanish explorations of the Northwest Coast.[48] Yet Quadra had been systematically passed over in commands that were given to officers that were *Peninsulares* with less experience and lower rank. The resentment of *Peninsulares* in Spanish America was, not surprisingly widespread and bitter. Malaspina supported self governance for the Spanish American

[48] Tovell's admirable biography of Quadra describes the adversity he faced serving in the Spanish navy. Freeman Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

possessions but his theoretical remedy embraced economic solutions without adequately addressing the core issues of representation and sovereignty.[49]

Malaspina's most telling and perhaps most inflammatory ideas are buried deep within the florid text of his *axiomas politicos*, where he repeatedly referred to America and Spain as separate entitites when as a matter of policy Spain never distinguished the Americas as anything but a complete extension of the Royal Spanish Dominion. In his fourth axiom he wrote: " The system of trade between Spain and America, on a poor foundation is directed towards mutual destruction: it cannot be stabilized without knowing the true interests of each party."[50] Spain perceived the Americas not as colonies but instead as *Espana Ultramarinha* literally the "overseas Spain". This is an important distinction that reveals not only fundamental differences in Spain's approach to non-contiguous possessions compared to that of other European powers but also provides an insight into what historian Anthony Pagden calls the Spanish Political Imaginary.[51]

Perhaps one of Malaspina's most glaring *faux pas* in his *Axiomas Politicos* can be read in this passage: "Therefore, just as the union of the Kingdoms of Aragon and Castile and of the Cantabrian provinces into one nation (accidentally a monarchy) was natural, so do conditions make a union between Spain and America impossible. A sea (once Spanish) which divides them, a soil and climate, some customs and local relationships

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[49] Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 136-137.

[50] Alejandro Malaspina, *Los "Axiomas politicos sobre la America" de Alejandro Malaspina*, ed. Manuel Lucena Giraldo and Juan Pimental Igea (Madrid: Teatrum Naturae, 1991), 21.

[51] Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 3-5.

which are entirely different, the natural opposition between conqueror and conquered, all go to show that such a union would be defective, not to mention imaginary."[52] As Kendrick observed in his biography of Malaspina, describing the monarchy of Spain as an "accident" at the same time that a similar accident was being corrected with violence against the king of France (who it must be remembered was a first cousin of the king of Spain) could not have been well received by Malaspina's superiors.[53]

One of the authors included in Malaspina's personal expedition library, along with Voltaire, Adams, Hume and Rousseau, was Thomas Jefferson, and throughout Malaspina's political axioms, traces of Jeffersonian republicanism surface, yet Malaspina seems in no way sympathetic towards the American revolution as a prescription for the ills of Spanish America (although he made pointed references to economic conditions shared between the english and Spanish colonies) and seemed genuinely appalled by events in France that were underway during the expedition.[54] Malaspina did not advocate democracy; if anything he seems to have been highly suspicious (not unlike many of the philosophes of the Enlightenment) of populist insurrections that elites of Malaspina's class tended to perceive as precursors to anarchy. Perhaps therein lies the key to understanding Malaspina's precarious and conflicting political views; the recurring theme through Malaspina's observational and interpretive writing was the idea of a "natural order" in all things. Yet, as in many places in Europe, enlightenment thinking in Spain

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[52] Malaspina, *Los "Axiomas politicos sobre la America" de Alejandro Malaspina,* ed. Manuel Lucena Giraldo and Juan Pimental Igea (Madrid: Teatrum Naturae, 1991), 22.

[53] Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary,* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 110.

[54] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume III*, 168-169.

was introduced and propagated by educated aristocratic elites. All that had been possible in Malaspina's remarkable career was owed to the patronage of elites superior to him; with the expedition of 1789-1794 he had been graced by the ultimate authority of the Spanish Empire. Malaspina was nothing if not loyal to his king, an implicit acceptance of an order that contradicted a natural meritocracy and ruled instead by divine right.

Malaspina's position and privilege in the period following the approval and departure of the expedition also warrants examination. In the immediate weeks and months after the death of Charles III, Charles IV largely retained his father's most powerful advisors and ministers. Charles IV was described as having had no interest in taking an active part in running the kingdom and had little or no expertise in governing. [55] There certainly would have been nothing unusual about a king in 18th century Europe acting as a *de facto* absentee monarch, who would leave the management of the kingdom to others (no matter how disastrous a course it might have appeared for a kingdom with the responsibilities of Spain). Malaspina's closest and most powerful benefactor was Minister of the navy Valdes. It was to Valdes that Malaspina addressed the majority of his official correspondence and we know that unofficially they were intimate friends.[56] The expedition was a naval mission, and Malaspina, in the knowledge of his relationship

[55] Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 376-377.

[56] Valdes was also the Spanish head of Malaspina's military-religious order, the Knights of St. John of Malta.

with Valdes, could have been certain that as long as Valdes remained in power Malaspina's position in the power structure of the navy remained secure.[57]

Malaspina carried extraordinary credentials with him that gave him power in the colonial Spanish empire bordering on that of a *visitador*.[58] At any Spanish port he could appropriate supplies, men or additional ships. He could schedule interviews with the colonial viceroy, his staff or any of the kingdom's servants, and he could expect unlimited access to colonial documentation and records. Malaspina exercised all of these powers and privileges from Montevideo to Manila and back again. It can be concluded that the Malaspina Expedition and Malaspina's command were secure because the ministers of Spain (particularly Valdes) were certain that they would, if anything, exercise greater power in the kingdom now that Charles IV was sat on the throne, yet events would prove otherwise.

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[57] Malaspina's position within the navy was one of Privilege that was not untypical for other officers with similar backgrounds (nobility).

[58] Visitadors were occasionally appointed by a Spanish monarch to inspect and rectify conditions or events in any part of the kingdom, they often had sweeping authority exceeding that of the Viceroys or local governments.

V. Cataloguing the Empire

An important element of Malaspina's personal philosophy that was reflected in the goals and execution of the expedition surrounded the form of early-modern scientificism that followed the introduction in 1735 by the Swede Carl Linne, better known by the epigram Linneaus-of his botanical classification system.[59] The Linnean taxonomic system led to an explosion of expeditions of scientific classification in late 18th century. The activities of observation, classification, collection and reporting fell neatly within Enlightenment models of science and creating order from disorder (figure 2.9).

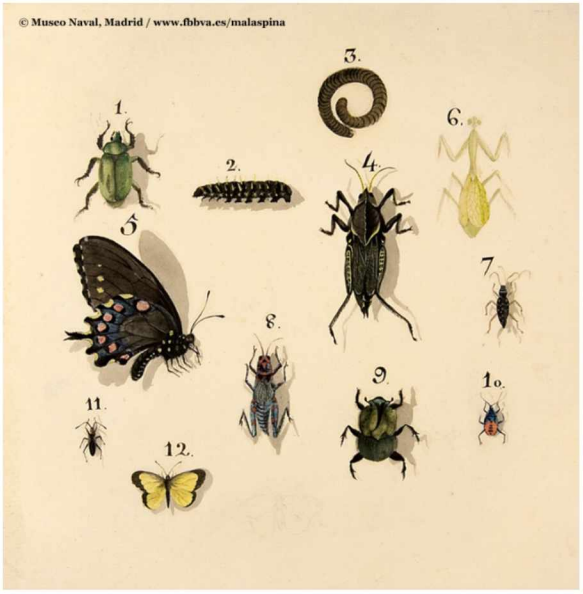

Figure 2.9. Illustration of insect specimens from the Malaspina Expedition. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

With the advent of the Linneaus system the cataloguing of things (not only flora and fauna) in the world became a global phenomenon, and while alternative variations on the Linnean scheme emerged, the overall thrust to classify was not unlike a religious

[59] Linne was better known by the epigram *Linneaus*. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 25.

evangelism (or perhaps crusade) to describe the visual or in the words of Gunnar Eriksson, "Faithfully represent nature's own plan." [60]

Malaspina's own philosophical thesis expressed in both his earliest writings as a student in Rome, his journal entries from the expedition, and his *Meditacion Sobre Lo Bello En La Natureza,* which was written years after the expedition while a prisoner in the fortress of St. Anton, attempt to draw parallels between human ideals and order and beauty in nature.[61] It is clear in Malaspina and Bustamante's selection of the complement of naturalists and artists for the expedition that the Linneaen approach, the systemizing of nature, would be the model for the expedition, and certainly expressed Malaspina's ideal of science. However, the expedition's protocols and ideals of objective scientific observation appear less consistent when Malaspina and his expedition encounter the most confounding (for all Europeans) American life form: the indigenous inhabitants.

There are no records of Malaspina's meeting Native Americans on any of his voyages before the expedition of 1789-1794. His first contact experience with written commentary occurred in January 1790 at the southern reaches of the American continent, Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego.[62] Two of the most famous creations (or enchantments) of

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[60] Ibid. 26. Gunnar Eriksson, "The Botanical success of Linnaeus. The Aspect of Organization and Publicity," in *Linneaus: Progress and Prospects in Linnean Research* (Pittsburgh and Stockholm, 1980), 66.

[61] Malaspina saw order and beauty as synonymous. Written after his conviction for treason while a prisoner, the title translates roughly to *Meditation on Beauty in Nature*, wherein he argues that ideals of perfection and beauty derive from observations of nature rather than human created art, see Alexandro Malaspina, *Meditacion Sobre Lo Bello En La Natureza*, ed. Trans., John Black, and Oscar Clemotte-Silvero (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2007).

[62] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, 136-139.

the early European contact in the Americas were the Amazons (a tribe or race of women warriors that purportedly inhabited what is now the Amazon basin), and the giants of Patagonia.[63] The Malaspina Expedition would not venture to the Amazon but did encounter Patagonians, who while not strictly giants were impressively tall by Spanish standards.[64] Malaspina's narrative of the encounter is disarmingly altruistic. Many months later, on the return leg of the voyage (and after he had been in contact with not only North American Natives but South Pacific peoples) he fell into mode of binary classification of native Americans that relied in part on some of the romanticized devices created by early French explorers in the Americas.[65] He identifies the Patagonians as the noble-savage but the Indians of Tierra del Fuego as wild and probably beyond the potential graces of civilization.[66] Malaspina's response to and treatment of indigenous peoples was diplomatic. He strove to locate the natives within the context of the political objectives of the expedition with the pragmatism of a commanding military officer in the field (or at sea) who had to balance prescribed policy goals, and subordinate personal principles.

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[63] John Hemming, *Red Gold: The conquest of the Brazilan Indians, 1500-1760* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 191-193.

[64] Reliable data on the heights of 18th century European men remains elusive, one recent study includes data on English, Irish, French, Northern Italian and Russians. John Komlos and F. Cinnirella, "European heights in the early 18th century," *Vierteljahrschrift Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 94, no. 3 (2007): 271–284.

[65] Hemming, *Red Gold: The conquest of the Brazilan Indians, 1500-1760*, 15-17.

[66] Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary*, 111-112.

VI. The Maldonado Relatión

Malaspina was at heart a scholar, and his pursuit of knowledge and truth, even in its curiously compromised 18th century fashion, was sincere. He committed substantial resources in the planning stage of the expedition to extensive research of existing accounts, maps, diaries or ships' logs from previous European expeditions to the Pacific. The thoroughness of the research extended to some very privileged information, such as a draft of the then unpublished reports from the LePerouse French expedition that had disappeared in 1788. In the course of the research José de Espinoza y Tello, one of Malaspina's junior officers, was delegated with combing archives in the capital.[67] While searching through the *Archivos des Indios* in Madrid, Espinosa uncovered a copy of Lorenzo Ferrer Maldonado's *Relatión*, the account of an alleged voyage in 1588 from the Atlantic Ocean via Davis Strait through the Strait of Anian to the Pacific Ocean and back again (figure 2.10). The narrative of the voyage and a plea for funding to secure the route for Spain evidently had been presented to the Spanish court in 1609.[68] Malaspina's initial response to the Maldonado *Relatión* was ambiguous, but there is evidence that he had some knowledge of it even before Espinosa's discovery.

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[67] This was possibly a task that Tello found odiously secretarial and below his station; Tello held an enduring enmity for his commander for entire length of the voyage.

[68] His plea met with very little success, in fact there are few official references to Ferrer Maldonado. One second hand observation from another member of the court described Maldonado's methods as "sharp practices". Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: Hakluyt Soc., 2003), 437.

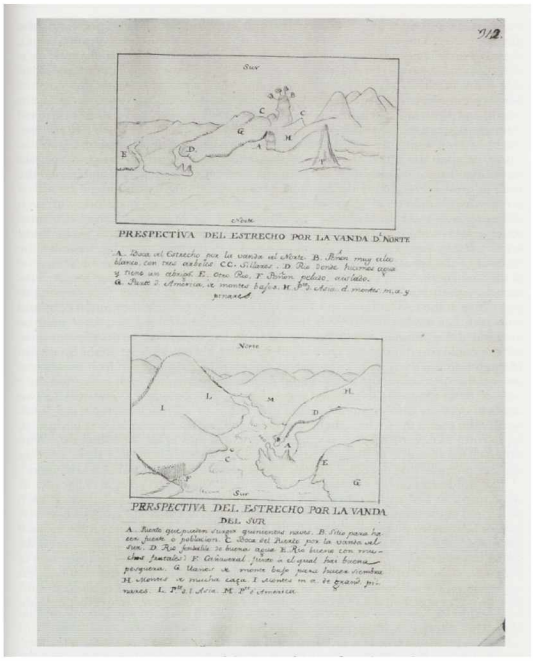

Figure 2.10. Original illustrations from the *Relatión* of Ferrer Maldonado, ca. 1609. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

On April 24, 1789 Malaspina asked Spanish *Ministro de Marina* Valdes whether when on the north coast of California he should look for the Northwest passage described by Maldonado (figure 2.11), included in a recently published volume, *Historia politica de los establicimientos ultramarines de las naciónes europeas.*[69] Then in June 1789 Malaspina again wrote Valdes that "among the valuable documents" Espinosa's search had turned up was a copy of Ferrer Maldonado's *Relatión* which, Malaspina wrote, "bore all the hallmarks of authenticity."[70]

[69] Authored by the Duke de Almadovar, probably brought to Malaspina's attention through the inclusion in the same volume of a report of Malaspina's own recent circumnavigation in the Astrea in 1786-88, Ibid., 318.

[70] It is not easily understood if the "authenticity" referred to is the provenance of the document discovered or the accuracy of Maldonado's assertions. ibid., 318-319

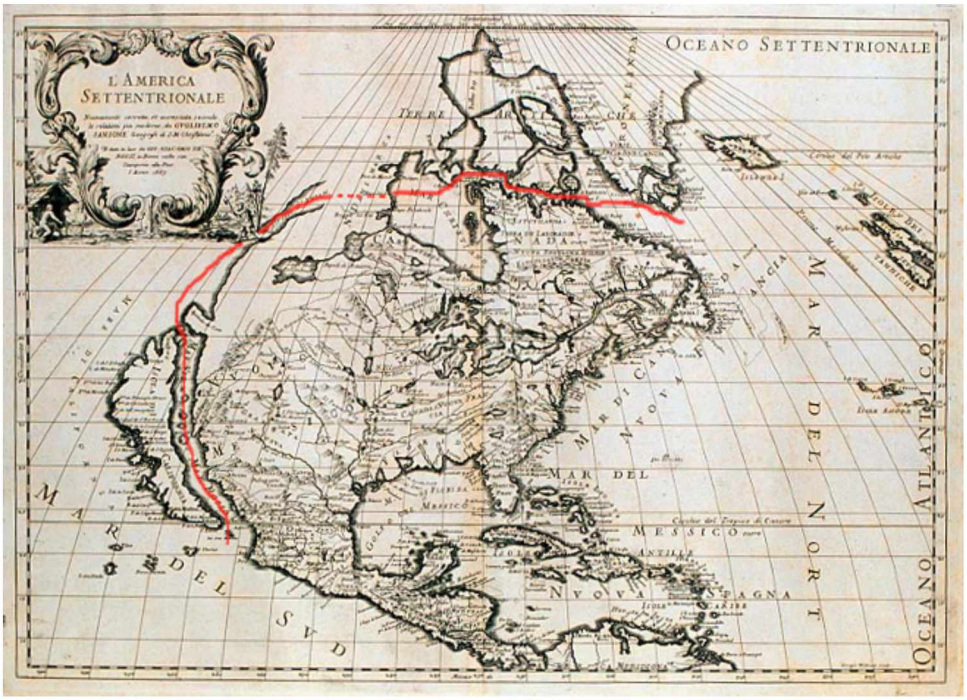

Figure 2.11. Ferrer Maldonado's fantastic voyage, illustrated on a period map by Nicolas Sanson ca. 1680. Source: University of Washington Libraries. Special Collections Division. Rare Map Collection. G3300 1680 S26.

Malaspina now thought that a more thorough examination of the Northwest Coast between 60° North and 65° North was called for. He wrote that there was "scope for a new exploration". Malaspina asked if copies of the newly discovered *Relatión* should be conveyed to the Academies of Science in Paris and London. Valdes responded that Malaspina should search for a Northwest Passage "according to circumstances," but specifically ordered that *nothing about the Maldonado Relatión should be revealed to foreign powers until Malaspina had completed his voyage.*[71] Malaspina did not forget the contents of the Maldonado *Relatión;* in a report of the previous year's efforts submitted to Valdes in September 1790 after the expedition had reached *Nuevo Espana*, Malaspina

[71] Another indication of Malaspina's influence or position with the Royal Court is the latitude of discretion given to the Captain in this matter, but Malaspina did not receive this correspondence from Valdes until the day he set sail. Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792*, 8-9.

wrote that his priority the following season would be a "thorough examination of the North Coast to confirm or otherwise the authenticity of Ferrer Maldonado Relation (which on mature reflection I do not find wholly absurd)."[72]

The Maldonado *Relation* was a "wild card," and Malaspina recognized that it was a low-percentage gamble in light of the extensive intelligence the Spanish held on the region in question, not only from their own voyages but from those of the French, Russians and English. The Spanish were even aware of the activities of Hudson Bay Company factor Samuel Hearne and his epic sojourn in interior Canada northwest of Hudson Bay.[73] Malaspina in hedging his final judgement on the Maldonado *Relatión* was aware that Cook, LePerous, Bering and Malaspina's fellow Spaniards had missed an examination of a significant stretch of the Northwest Coast, including the area that corresponded to the same latitude described as the location of the mouth of the Strait of Anian in the 16th century Maldonado *Relatión*. While still in the planning stages of the expedition in Spain Malaspina, the accomplished navigator, could defer a commitment for a search of the coast in question. However, at the very time that the expedition was making its final preparations to leave Cadiz events on the other side of the world at Spain's farthest north outpost at Nootka Sound were moving beyond Malaspina's, or indeed Madrid's, discretion and control.

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[72]Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*.320. Malaspina would later reconsider, for practical reasons related to time and perhaps input from the most knowledgeable Spanish source Capitan de Navio Don Juan de la Bodega y Quadra, commandant of the Naval Division in San Blas.Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792*, 10.

[73] The Hearne expedition report, if correctly interpreted, eliminated all possibility of a navigable waterway to the Pacific Ocean south of 68 degrees latitude North. The Cook Expedition was also aware of this information. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, c.s. mackinnon, n.d. < http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=1943>, accessed 3/05/2012.

For Malaspina and his mission the delineation between scientific and imperial objectives would, like his personal struggle with accommodating an enlightenment philosophy with his duty to an absolute Monarch, become increasingly muddied as the expedition began operating in contested waters. What was once the "Spanish Lake" the Pacific ocean and particularly the Northwest Coast of America would in 1789 develop into a geopolitical maelstrom that would finally break the back of not only Spanish political imaginary (with reference to claims to the west coast of America) but Spain's invaluable strategic alliance with France: the Family Compact.

CHAPTER 3: Beyond the Southern Sea

I. Cadiz to Peru

In a celebrated motion picture from 2003, the captain of a fictional English royal navy frigate operating in remote and hostile waters off the Pacific coast of South America, declares to his crew : "And though we be on the far side of the world, this ship is our home, this ship is England." The dilemma for the Spanish *Viaje cientifico y politico alrededor del mundo* under the command of Alessandro Malaspina, would be that the home, the Spain that the expedition had been designed to exemplify (if not promote) when they sailed from Cadiz in the summer of 1789 no longer existed when it arrived in Peru in summer of 1790. The succession of a new government in Spain, the developing revolution in France, and an unforeseen diplomatic crisis with England would affect the goals and schedule of the expedition proper as well as reveal an underlying stress in the original conception for the expedition (as a political-scientific voyage) and the incongruities between Malaspina's personal philosophy and the broader priorities of the absolutist Empire he served.

The Expedition first reached Montivideo on September 20, 1789 after an uneventful transatlantic passage, and within days of arriving it had established an onshore observatory to expedite a hydrographic survey of the harbor. One of the ships was dispatched across the wide estuary of the Rio de la Plata to proceed with mapping the coastline south.[1] This would be the primary work pattern of the expedition for the next five

[1] Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), 41.

years only to be interrupted by transoceanic passages, resupply and refit stops in major colonial ports and a limited number of special reconnaissances onshore.

After resupply and refitting along with political "investigations" in the colonial centers of Buenas Aires and Montevideo (figure 3.1) that consumed almost six weeks, the reunited expedition departed the Rio de la Plata on November 13 and proceeded with the southbound survey of coastal Spanish America. The progress and focus of the Spanish mapping mission was often dictated by perceived gaps in Spain's cartographic "record." The expedition turned its attention towards the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) in late December partly to update nautical charts of the archipelago and partly to reconnoiter any evidence of English colonization.[2]

Figure 3.1. Buenas Aires ca. 1790. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

In Malaspina's estimation the coast around the Strait of Magellan and Cape horn had been thoroughly surveyed and mapped by both recent Spanish and English hydrogra-

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[2] The Malvinas or Falkland Islands fixed heavily in Spanish strategic concerns for the South Atlantic, the English had abandoned their most recent colony established in 1765. Ibid., 109.

phy. Malaspina prioritized survey work on the west coast of America and decided to take a far-south route around the capricious and hazardous Cape Horn. The passage over the course of December 30, 1789 (departing from the Falkland Islands) to January 21, 1790 (when Patagonia peaks were spotted to the east) was relatively swift and uneventful, the *Descubierta* rounding the 'horn' at a distance of some 53 leagues by observed position. By February 4 they arrived at the Spanish colonial outpost of Puerto San Carlos de Chiloe (modern Chile), then Valparaiso on the March 17 and finally Callao, in the vice-royalty of Peru (the harbor adjacent to Lima) on May 21.[3] The expedition at this point had been at sea for almost ten months, having left Cadiz Spain July 30, 1789.

In 1790 Calao/Lima in the viceroyalty of Peru provided the best European ship-yard on the Pacific Ocean outside of Canton or Macau, and after ten months of sea duty, both corvettes required refitting and resupply; the crews and officers also were in need of rest. A significant stay in Callao/Lima had been part of the original sailing plan not the least because of time requirements of Malaspina's political investigations into the finances and administration of the viceroyalty. The expedition would stay at Callao for four months, the officers acquired horses and suitable housing onshore, and the crew in general debauched and deserted at an alarming rate. Malaspina made many remarks in the journal pertaining to disciplinary problems and the temptations and dangers of what was evidently a "wild" port. In the first month he wrote regarding about desertion and discipline: "Even if we had not known beforehand of the unruliness of the seamen in Callao, I could not have concealed from myself the fact that such measures [withholding pay]

[3] Ibid., 213-215.

would be of little or no effect if not attached to much more powerful instruments than advice or punishment. These are ineffective when pleasure, example, climate, idleness and ease of subsistence are all conducive to vice and difficult to apply when desertion is as easy as crime."[4]

Malaspina's expedition was the most significant Spanish naval presence in the region, and in between repairs the ships and crew took on police and patrol duties during the duration of the Callao/Lima anchorage, while the expedition's naturalists Haenke and Nee made significant inland "collecting" excursions.[5]

II. The King's Agent

Malaspina's activities in the colonial capital of Lima (figure 3.2) on behalf of the Crown were the first thorough implementation of his political investigations (Montivideo and Buenas Aires were far less important in Spain's ultramarine world and the expedition's sailing schedule abbreviated its time there). Peru was in administrative transition when the Malaspina expedition arrived, with a new viceroy Francisco Gil de Taboada Lemos y Villamarín having arrived in Lima overland only the week before Malaspina.[6] After the new viceroy's installation Malaspina delegated to one of his officers CayetanoValdes (the nephew of Minister of the Marine Valdes), making contact and presenting the expedition's special orders for reviewing the administration of the viceroyalty. The process re-

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[4] Ibid., 220.

[5] Ibid., 225.

[6] Francisco Gil de Taboada Lemos y Villamarín' ceremonial entry into the capital was on May 17th. R. Vargas Ugarte, *Historia General del Peru* (Lima, 1966), 99.

ceived only two sentences of description in Malaspina's journal, but Kendrick in researching Malaspina's personal correspondence during this first stay in Callao/Lima detected friction between the new viceroy and Malaspina and frustration on Malaspina's part with either the degree of cooperation or the "infinite difficulties and flatteries presented by this country to those who are a little careless."[7] Any slight to Malaspina's "authority" by the viceroy could have been ascribed to the indifference of a royal functionary responding to yet another order from Madrid, but another interpretation can be inferred with reference to geopolitical events that had occurred since Malaspina's departure from Cadiz a year earlier.

To begin, the new viceroy of Peru was a *peninsular* whose service to the crown had begun, like Malaspina's, in the Spanish navy. *Francisco Gil de Taboada Lemos y Villamarín* was a highly respected and experienced former naval commander with considerable seniority over either Malaspina or Bustamante. Gil was well known to Malaspina; they had both served in the marine atlas survey of Spain, as commandants of cadets in the naval academy, and they shared the friendship of Minister of the Marine AntonioValdes. What is more, Viceroy Gil's personal philosophy was described in terms usually reserved for *Illustrados*; later in his viceregency he was a supporter of the "enlightened press" embodied in Lima by the periodical "*Mercurio Peruano,"* and he was generally identified as a progressive reformer.[8] Malaspina and Viceroy Gil seemed to be

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[7] Malaspina to Greppi September 15, 1790 in John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 49.

[8] Ugarte, *Historia General del Peru*, 100

kindred souls, so the chilly reception for the expedition and its commander were perhaps the first indications that Malaspina's star had begun to fade.

Since the end of July 1789, Malaspina, Bustamante and the 200 odd officers and crew of the expedition had essentially been living in a time capsule as they had measured their way around the high latitude extremities of South America. The years 1789 and 1790 were very eventful; only two weeks before the expedition's departure from Spain a revolutionary mob had stormed the Bastille in Paris; the violence in Paris and the self-declaration of the National Assembly on July 17 were probably the last news of events in France known to Malaspina before his departure.

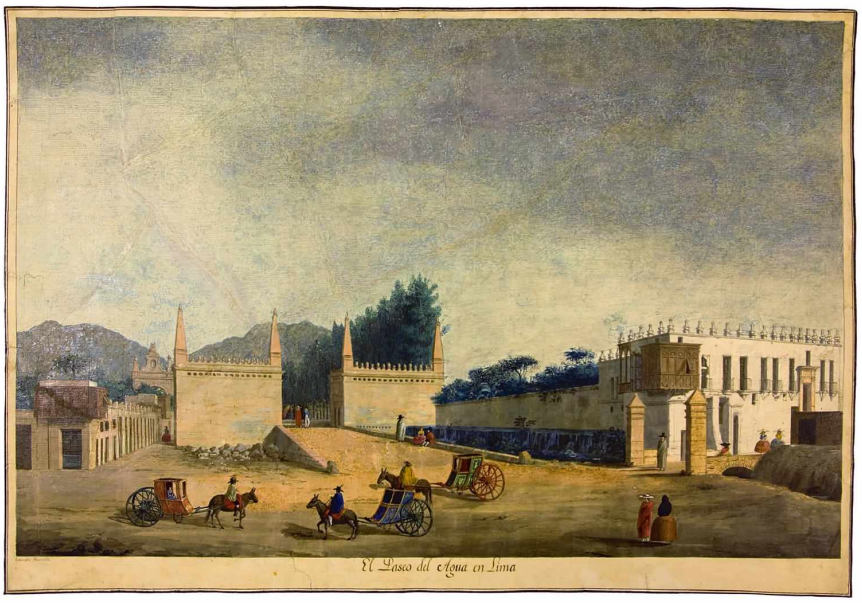

Figure 3.2. Lima Peru, 1790. Painted by Malaspina expedition artist Fernando Brambila. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

In October, while the expedition had been at sea, the palace of Versailles had been stormed and King Louis XVI had been forced back to Paris. Within weeks of the Malaspina Expedition's arrived in Callao/Lima, the French National Constituent Assem-

bly had abolished all of the mechanisms and symbols of the French nobility, but perhaps more importantly for Spain, earlier in the month of May the same Revolutionary French National Constituent Assembly had *renounced involvement in wars of conquest,* foreshadowing a dramatically reordered military posture.[9] The events in France held Europe and indeed much of the world's rapt attention, but especially that of Bourbon Spain. It is fair to say that Spain's entire geopolitical strategy hinged on its dynastic alliance with France - the Family Compact established in 1761.[10] The volatile political situation in France with the new limits on royal authority placed the Spanish - French alliance in question, and like a hungry predator, England, smelled blood and would seek its advantage when opportunity arrived.

III. Esteban Martinez and the English Satisfaction

Ironically, England's opportunity would be delivered by the naval division of San Blas. Spanish Minister of the Indies Galvez had continued to press Spanish voyages to the Northwest Coast beyond Monterey in the two decades since his visit to Nuevo Espana. In 1786 the French LePerouse Expedition visited Monterey, where the Spaniards graciously resupplied the French and in turn the French revealed information on Russian activities on the North Coast that suggested Russian progress had extended as far south as Nootka

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[9] The actions of the Constituent assembly were focused on limiting the power of the Bourbon monarchy to make war which had direct relation to Spain's valuably alliance with France "the Family Compact". Howard V. Evans, "The Nootka Sound Controversy in Anglo-French Diplomacy--1790," *The Journal of Modern History* 46, no. 4 (January 1974): 613-614.

[10] The family compact between France and Spain was reiterated several times, the third version by Charles III in 1761. John Lynch, *Bourbon Spain* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 251.

Sound. [11] The senior Spanish naval officer present in Monterey was Esteban Jose Martinez. Martinez reported the French information to the current viceroy of Nuevo Espana the Conde Galvez (who was the nephew of the Minister of the Indies Jose Galvez), raising an alarm that was further fueled by diplomatic reports from St. Petersburg and Chile of significant escalation in Russian activities.[12] The net result would be a fourth Spanish expedition to reconnoiter the Northwest Coast this time under the command of the same Esteban Martinez.

The Martinez Expedition of 1788 sailed as far as what is now Unalaska, and confirmed the significant progress made by the Russians eastward into Spanish claimed territory. Martinez managed to alienate most of his officers in the course of the journey, but they all agreed on the substance of his report to the viceroy afterwards which generally confirmed the LePerouse information (although the Russians at this time had not reached Nootka and in fact had not made any permanent stations east of the Kenai Peninsula).[13] Martinez recommended in the strongest terms that Spain occupy Nootka by the spring of

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[11] LePerouse later criticized Spanish secretiveness in that he would not have known of the Monterey outpost except for his copy of an English translation of the Spanish Mourelle Journal (Mourelle had sailed the North coast with Quadra in 1776). The French had also stopped in Santiago Chile where they shared similar information and maps with the Spanish Royal *Intendan*t Jose Miguel Urezberatoa. These could have been any of a number of French maps based on Russian information such as those produced by the Delisle house in Paris. As Perouse would discover the information in these maps was often speculative and highly inaccurate. See: L. Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific," *Imago Mundi* 3, no. 1 (1939): 87-99.

[12] Warren Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 113-116.

[13] Martinez was accused by several of his officers of erratic mood swings and puzzling navigational decisions that some have attributed to drinking. Ibid., 123-124.

1789, before Russia did.[14] Both the new viceroy of *Nueva Espana* Manuel Antonio Flores Maldonado (1787-1789) and the royal court in Madrid took Martinez' report to heart, and despite the complaints of the officers who had served under him in 1788, Esteban Martinez was chosen to command a Spanish expedition to establish an outpost at Nootka Sound (figure 3.3) as soon as possible. The expedition sailed for Nootka in February 1789.[15]

Figure 3.3. Ceremonial dances at Nootka depicted by a European artist and based on written reports, ca 1790. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

Upon the Spaniard's arrival at Nootka in May 1789, they found two vessels already at anchor in the sound engaged in the lucrative sea otter pelt trade with the local native peoples; one vessel was American and the other a Portuguese flagged vessel out of

[14] The Russian factors that Martinez encountered in Kodiak and Unalaska warned of a major Russian naval expedition that intended to establish a permanent colony at Nootka, there were plans for a new State expedition but it never materialized on the scale presented to Martinez. See: J. R. Gibson, "A Notable Absence: The Lateness and Lameness of Russian Discovery and Exploration in the North Pacific, 1639-1803," in *From Maps to Metaphors: The Pacific World of George Vancouver*, ed. Robin Fischer and Hugh Johnston (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993), 96-97.

[15] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*,132-134.

Macau (surreptitiously operated by an English commercial concern). Martinez, after discovering incriminating evidence onboard the Portuguese ship (the *Ifgenia*), seized both the ship and its crew for operating and anchoring in a Spanish harbor without license from the Spanish Crown, but a few days later he relented and released them on condition that they return to Macau immediately (an order which they disobeyed once out of sight of the Spanish).[16] Between July 2 and July 12 Martinez seized two more English vessels that were part of the same commercial plan conceived in India for exploiting the sea otter trade on the Northwest Coast and led by Englishman John Meares.[17] The seized English ships were then sailed back to San Blas with their English, crews as prisoners.[18]

England at the time of the Nootka incident was in the late reign of George III who suffered a well documented madness that publicly manifested itself in 1788 when he was observed to greet an oak tree believing it was his cousin Frederick the Great of Prussia. The king's incapacity threatened to lead to a regency (who in all probability would have been the king's son George, the Prince of Wales), but the king recovered somewhat in

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[16] Martinez found Portuguese orders onboard the *Ifgenia* instructing the ship to resist any attempts at seizure if detained by the Spanish and asserting the right to commerce on the Northwest Coast based on the discoveries of Bartholomew de Fonte. The mythological "Admiral de Fonte's" northwest passage is often seen in speculative maps of the region. Ibid., 152.

[17] The highly lucrative sea otter trade, once monopolized by the Russians became widely known after Cook's third voyage when the expedition discovered the high demand in Canton for the furs acquired on the Northwest Coast. Subsequent English trading for Sea Otter was often led by men who had served as junior officers on the Cook Expedition. B.M. Gough, "India-Based Expeditions of Trade and Discovery in the North Pacific in the Late Eighteenth Century," *Geographical Journal* 155, no. 2 (1989): 215–223; Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 160-178.

[18] One of the English ships, the Argonaut, carried Chinese artisans and materials that the Spanish then used for building fortifications in Nootka.

February 1789. Throughout the George III's illness and recovery the Prime Minister William Pitt (figure 3.4) filled any vacuum left by the ordinarily larger-than-life George III.[19]

Figure 3.4. William Pitt the younger, Prime Minister of England. Source: Original painting by Hoppner, Tate Gallery, London

The bellicose English response to the Nootka incident generally follows one (or possibly both) of two interpretations: 1) Pitt sought to destroy the French/Spanish alliance, The Family Pact, in order to usurp Spanish claims on any "unoccupied" territory and to gain commercial access to colonial Spanish markets, or 2) Pitt sought to break the French/Spanish alliance, The Family Pact, in order to weaken an unstable and strategically dangerous France.[20] Pitt's method was a high-stakes 18th century game of diplo-

[19] An excellent account of this time period and biography of Pitt (figure 3.7) can be found in: John Ehrman, *The Younger Pitt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983).

[20] In a meeting between Pitt and the French Ambassador Luzerne in London in the early stages of the crisis when Pitt declared that the English were asking the right to traffic or settle in unoccupied regions not only for themselves but for all nations and then asked Luzerne if he would regard a war waged for these principles as an offensive war, the Ambassador found the question embarrassing. He avoided a direct answer by making a jesting remark in regard to the prior rights of the native inhabitants. G. V. Blue, "Anglo-French

matic brinksmanship; the English government made a series of increasingly outrageous demands on the government of Spain that would either humiliate Spain impossibly or drive it into a war with England, a war which Spain most likely could not win without its French ally.

The Nootka incident, which had occurred in June and July of 1789 (just as the Malaspina Expedition was putting to sea), did not reach its incendiary peak in Europe until almost a year after the events. In February 1790 the Duke of Leeds, English Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs communicated to his Spanish counterpart the Conde Campo de Alange that he "had his Majesty's order to declare , that the Act of Violence, mentioned in his Letter [the seizure of the English ships], must necessarily cause all discussion on the claims, therein also mention, to be suspended, until a just and suitable Satisfaction should be made for a proceeding so injurious to Great Britain."[21] The most spectacular feature of the English note to Spain was this demand for unconditional "satisfaction" without first entertaining any of the Spanish arguments for their actions.[22] In May 1790 John Meares (figure 3.5), the central English character in the Nootka incident returned to London and published an inaccurate and inflammatory account of the seizures.[23]

Diplomacy during the Critical Period of the Nootka Controversy , 1790," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1938): 162-179.

[21] Leeds to Campo de Alange, Whitehall, February 26, 1790, Archivo Historico Nacional, Madrid, Spain, Estado 4291, in Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 206.

[22] Lennox Mills, "The Real Significance of the Nootka Sound Incident," *Canadian Historical Review* 6, no. 2 (1925): 112.

[23] Curiously, Meares (figure 3.8), who had served as a junior officer on Cook's third and final expedition, still held an officer's commission in the English Royal Navy at the same time that he was leading the commercial trading enterprise on the North coast that led to the Nootka Incident. Many of the most active Eng-

The English Parliament in response to the public outcry authorized war finances. The week of May 14 the French Constituent Assembly responded to a Spanish request to support the Family Pact by mobilizing 45 ships of war; Spain had already mobilized more than 50.[24] All of the diplomats involved in negotiations from France, Spain and England wrote that they believed war was unavoidable. This was the state of Europe with regard to Spain when the Malaspina expedition repaired and refitted in Callao/Lima in the summer of 1790.

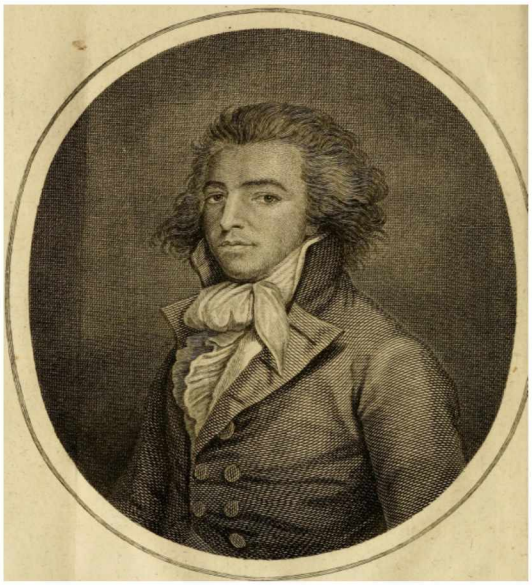

Figure 3.5. John Meares, English royal navy officer and "entrepreneur" of the sea otter trade. Source: John Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789, from China to the North West Coast, London, 1790.*

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lish traders on the North coast in this first period of activity were like Meares – ex - Cook officers or still on the Royal Navy lists.

[24] The Nootka incident is highly complex but the most thorough chronicle remains Warren Cook's work in: *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973, 146-270; also see George Verne Blue, "Anglo-French Diplomacy during the Critical Period of the Nootka Controversy , 1790." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1938): 162-179; and Howard V. Evans, "The Nootka Sound Controversy in Anglo-French Diplomacy--1790." *The Journal of Modern History* 46, no. 4 (January 1974): 609.

Most of the developments in the Nootka Crisis and French Revolution would have been well known to Viceroy Gil when he arrived in Lima in May. In late June another Spanish warship arrived in Callao, the frigate *Liebre*, dispatched from Spain before the general mobilization as a precautionary measure to bolster Spain's defenses in the Pacific. The timing of the *Liebre's* (and an additional Spanish warship that followed) orders to Peru seem coincidental with the British admiralty plan for a pair of frigates to rendezvous in Australia with the famous exploring ship the HMS *Discovery*. In the English plan the frigate HMS *Sirius* (28 guns) and the frigate HMS *Gorgon* (44 guns) along with the HMS *Discovery* were to proceed with supplies and colonists to Nootka Sound. The English naval expedition was to be met at Nootka (or more likely the mainland which still remained unclear in England's cartography of the region) by a party that would be dispatched by the Governor-General of Canada to travel overland from Montreal to the North coast.[25] The English plan was a direct response to the Nootka incident with the intent to provide a defended and permanent English outpost on the Northwest Coast, by force if necessary.[26] England, which had already fought Spain in five separate wars in the 18th century, seemed to be willing to carry another war with Spain to the Northwest Coast of the Americas.

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[25] Rene Chartrand, "Malaspina and the Spanish Explorations: A Contribution to the Geostrategic History of Canada's West Coast," in *Malaspina' 92: Jornadas Internacionales Cadiz-1994*, ed. Mercedes Palau Baquero and Antonio Orozco Acuaviva (Cadiz: Real Academia Hispano-Americana, 1994), 322.

[26] The expedition in the end did not materialize, the English government deciding that the Northwest Coast was too remote to operate effectively against unknown Spanish resources and Spain's advantages of distance to its colonial ports. Ibid., 323.

The news from Europe, the arrival of two Spanish frigates and an unreceptive viceroy must have meant that by the end of July Malaspina, who was used to being the brightest light in any room, was quickly becoming a small fish in the harbor of Callao. It may have been with some relief to Malaspina that the expedition, now resupplied and refitted, was ready to proceed on the next leg of the voyage from Peru to Nuevo Espana, departing Callao on September 20, 1790. Sailing north the expedition would repeat the official visits to regional capitals with a month spent in both Panama and Guayaquil (now Ecuador) before arriving in Acapulco on March 27, 1791. Owing to Acapulco's proximity to the capital of Mexico City, Malaspina chose to divide the expedition, sending Bustamante in the *Atrevida* on to San Blas (headquarters and harbor for the Naval Division) while Malaspina and his staff proceeded to Mexico City.[27]

IV. The Redirection

After more than a year at sea the Malaspina Expedition was, by any measure, going brilliantly according to plan. The next steps included a political appraisal of the state of *Nuevo Espana* (Mexico), and then after refit and resupply, sailing directly from Acapulco to the Hawaiian Islands, the Philippines, New Zealand and Australia, and then returning to Mexico before sailing for Kamchatka. However, in *Nueva Espana* unforeseen events would overtake the expedition, adding a new chapter to the legacy of the voyage. Shortly

[27] Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: Hakluyt Soc., 2003), 51.

after arriving in Mexico City, Malaspina received a message from Bustamante in San Blas that new royal orders had arrived from Spain:

> I had barely fulfilled the main objects of my journey to Mexico City and was preparing on the morning of the 16th to undertake the return to Acapulco, when a special courier arrived from San Blas with sealed letters, dated 7 April, from the commanding officer of the Atrevida to the Viceroy and myself. He advised of his happy return to that Department on 29 March, stating that fitting out was proceeding with dispatch and that orders from the King addressed to me from his Excellency the Ministro de Marina had arrived at San Blas the previous day and prescribed for the following summer a survey of the coasts of northern America at around the parallel of 60° so as to ascertain whether there was any possible truth in the obscure report of Ferrer Maldonado about a channel to the Atlantic.[28]

In short the contents of the royal orders revealed that the previous November (1790), Philippe Bauche de Neuville had presented a paper to the Academy of Science in Paris based on the same Maldonado *Relatión* (figure 3.6) uncovered by Malaspina's researchers before the expedition's departure from Spain in the summer of 1789.

[28]Ibid., 63.

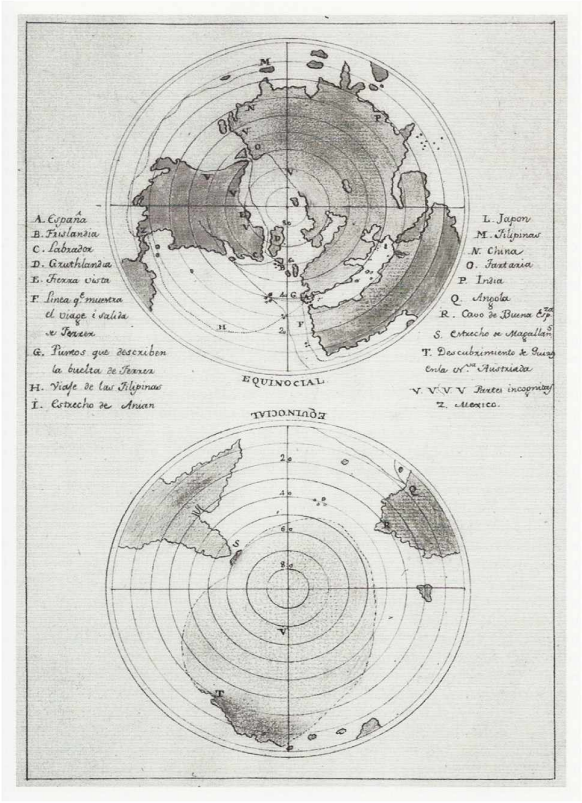

Figure 3.6. Map from the original Ferrer Maldonado *Relatión*, ca. 1609. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

Bauche de Neuville was the present principle of the famous Parisian mapmaking house of *Delisle* and held the prestigious title *"Geographe du Roi"* (the king's Geographer) for the court of Louis XVI.[29] How the Maldonado *Relation* reached France after Minister Valdes had specifically ordered its suppression remains as much of a mystery as who in Spain had been impressed by the Bauche de Neuville presentation at the Paris Academy, but it

[29]Louis XVI's reign was precarious at best when Bauche presented to the Academy and more so by March 1791, so the title *Geographe du Roi* had become entirely decorative, particularly in light of French royal finances. Patriarch Claude Delisle was succeeded by his son Guillaume Delisle, the Delisles were instrumental in the dissemination of speculative cartography/maps of North America containing depictions of fictional northwest passages, Bauche de Neuville was Guillaume Delisles' son-in-law. Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific." 89.

must be deduced that it was someone above the rank of Minister Valdes who had already been aware of the Maldonado *Relatión*.[30]

In Maldonado's *Relatión* a northwest passage, named the Strait of Anian, ended at the Pacific Ocean in an enormous bay capable in Maldonado's estimation of holding five hundred vessels. Maldonado even claimed to have encountered another ship passing through the strait in the opposite direction, a ship full of Hanseatic Lutherans who could only communicate with Maldonado in Latin.[31] Perhaps most tantalizing, Maldonado provided a geographic coordinate for the entrance of the *Strait of Anian*, a latitude that transposed to a part of the Northwest Coast that had largely missed the scrutiny of Cook in 1778, Bodega y Quadra in 1779, Lapérouse in 1786 or Fidalgo in 1790.[32]

Valdes's instructions were curt: Malaspina was to proceed north from *Nuevo Espana* and investigate the existence of Ferrer Maldonado's strait, Malaspina was to use as a guide a copy of the report just issued by the French *Academie Royale des Sciences* of November 13, 1790 based on the memoir submitted by Phillipe Bauche de Neuville.[33]

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[30] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*. Appendix 2, 430-432.

[31] Ibid., document 1, 448.

[32] The location described by Maldonado did however closely correspond to a place described in the very recent accounts of English Captain George Dixon, who served under Cook on his third voyage and as a private trader visited the North coast in 1787, visiting and trading in a large Bay at 60 degree latitude that he named *Port Mulgrave*. The Dixon account *A Voyage Round the World, but More Particularly to the North-West Coast of America,* only published in England in 1789 was in Malaspina's library of the *Descubierta*. Shelikov also claims that a small party under Russian command from Kodiak Island reached the same location in 1788, but this information was not available to the Spanish.

[33] Alexandro Malaspina, *Meditacion Sobre Lo Bello En La Natureza*, ed. Trans., John Black, and Oscar Clemotte-Silvero (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2007). Appendix 1, *"Valdes to Malaspina. Madrid, 22 December 1790,"* 417.

Malaspina, originally receptive to the Maldonado *Relatión*, had "matured" in his views on its veracity, and would later write a critical dissertation on the Maldonado *Relatión* in particular and the field of speculative geography in general.[34] The co-commander of the expedition Bustamante unhesitatingly wrote of his objections in advance, broadly rejecting the Maldonado account as "fictitious"[35] The irony is heavy that Bauche de Neuville in his submission to the *Academie Royale des Sciences* made references to actual, documented explorations that with any scrutiny would have invalidated the Maldonado story. In the first introductory paragraphs of his memoir to the Academy Bauche de Neuville wrote:

> The importance of the NW Passage to America has been recognized for nearly three hundred years. It is still the object of frequent investigations by the trading nations of Europe, and a prize of twenty thousand pounds sterling is on offer by the English Parliament to her navigators if they discover it. Considering the many unsuccessful attempts that have been made to this end, and , recently, the voyage undertaken by the celebrated Cook to survey the Northwest Coast of America where one of the entrances to the passage is thought to lie; by Mr. Young to examine again Hudson Bay, where the other [eastern] entrance was thought to be; and by Mr. Hearne and Mr. Pond travelling from Hudson Bay to the limits of the Frozen Sea through lands where a strait had been imagined, anyone could be led to doubt the existence of a communication between the two seas, and this is probably the general opinion to this day. Notwithstanding this, reassured by the weight of evidence I am now commending to the Academy the rela-

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[34] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, 468-480.

[35] Ibid., 461-467.

> tion written by a navigator who at the very time when its existence began to be questioned found the NW Passage. [36]

After 10 days in Mexico City, Malaspina dutifully accepted his orders, returned to his ship and reunited with Bustamante, began planning for the new mission.[37] On learning that they would be sailing to the North coast instead of Hawaii at least 12 of the Descubierta's crew deserted ship at first opportunity.[38]

Preparations in San Blas for the new mission to the North coast were completed in less than 30 days. Malaspina and Bustamante both commended the close support of the former explorer Capitan de Navio Don Juan de la Bodega y Quadra, who was now commander of the naval division in San Blas.[39] With all preparations completed and crew complements replenished (with soldiers and marines from San Blas and Acapulco), the two ships departed Acapulco on the morning of May 1, 1790. Bodega y Quadra (and Mourelle) were able to impart much valuable knowledge regarding the passage to the north coast from several previous voyages. Malaspina respected this information and ac-

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[36] Samuel Hearne who in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company 1771-72 traveled overland from Churchill, Hudson Bay through interior Canada territory to the Arctic ocean without encountering a passage or waterway of any kind, effectively eliminating the potential of a northwest passage south of 70° North latitude. Peter Pond was a pioneering trader in western Canada in the late 18th century, but there is no evidence he ever reached the Arctic Ocean although he did create maps representing the region. See *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, s.v. "Peter Pond," http://www.biographi.ca (accessed December 5, 2011).

[37] Wagner writes that Bustamante was making preparations in San Blas to sail to the Northwest Coast independent of Malaspina when the orders arrived from Madrid. This version of events is not supported in the Hakluyt journal which was published much later. Henry R. Wagner, *The Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America to the year 1800, Volume I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1937), 226.

[38] Donald Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991), 15.

[39] Quadra's role in Spain's affairs on the North coast were not nearly at an end. In 1792 he would serve as Spain's chief negotiator at Nootka with his counterpart for England George Vancouver. Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 362-365.

cordingly steered well west from the coast of Mexico for more than a week in order to find the favorable winds (recorded in sailing directions by Bodega y Quadra) that would speed their journey.[40] Three weeks later, on May 21, Malaspina, after studying the reports and maps of Cook, Portlock, Bodega y Quadra, Arteaga and Fidalgo for several days decided to arrange, in the case of separation, for the two corvettes to rendezvous at a place named Port Mulgrave by English captain George Dixon in 1787.[41] The location of Port Mulgrave corresponded closely to that of the entrance to the Strait of Anian in the Maldonado *Relation*. Malaspina's search would begin there.

On June 22, after more than six weeks at sea, noon solar observations placed the *Descubierta* only 60 leagues from the entrance of Bucareli Bay, the commander of the Atrevida (the ships managed to make the voyage in company) signaled that his chronometer measurements disagreed with his sextant observations, and navigators on both ships increased the frequency of their observations to avoid errors in such close proximity to an unknown coast.[42] The next day, at 10:00 in the morning the coast came clearly into view interrupting the morning's navigational observations. *Cabo Engano* (Cape Edgecumbe) was soon identified, eliminating any question as to the expedition's position. The Spaniards, exhibiting excellent seamanship and masterful navigation had arrived on

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[40] Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792*, 10.

[41] Dixon on a trading voyage in 1787 anchored for almost 2 weeks in what is today the Yakutat Roadstead at 59°33' N, 139°46' W. The area had also been briefly reconnoitered by members of the French Le Perouse expedition in June 1786. See: W. Beresford, *A voyage round the world; but more particularly to the north-west coast of America; performed in 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788, in the service of King George and Queen Charlotte, Captains Portlock and Dixon*, (London, 1789), 170.

[42] Bucareli Bay, in the Alexander Archipelago, located off the western coast of Prince of Wales Island, in modern southeastern Alaska near the community of Craig. Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, 100-103.

the north coast very close to their intended destination.[43] The artist Tomas Suria remarked that the cold was so intense that he was unable to sketch on deck and had to retreat below to complete his drawings.[44]

Four days later on June 27, the expedition arrived off Port Mulgrave (what is today Yakutat Bay) and excitement over the prospect of a true discovery seemed to replace earlier skepticism, especially among the officers as they approached an obviously dramatic gap in the coastal range of mountains at an observed latitude 59°15'N. Malaspina wrote: "We saw an inlet whose mouth and course seemed to tally with the coast described by Ferrer Maldonado. At once imagination soon supplied a thousand reasons in support of hope"[45] The artist Suria, witnessing the scene on deck wrote in his own journal: "Great was the joy of the commander and of all the officers because they believed, and with some foundation, that this might be the so much desired and sought-for strait . . . Transported with joy our commander steered towards the opening." [46]
Even the commander of the *Atrevida*, Bustamante, who had roundly criticized the Ferrer Maldonado account seemed to warm to the prospects, Suria continues:
"there was hardly anyone among us who was not ready to believe in the probable existence of the longed for passage."[47]

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[43]Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792*, 22 -23.

[44] Tomas de Suria, *Journal of Tomas de Suria and His Voyage with Malaspina to the Northwest Coast of America in 1791*, ed. Donald Cutter (Fairfield: University of Washington Press, 1980), 34.
[45]Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, 103.

[46] Suria, *Journal of Tomas de Suria and His Voyage with Malaspina to the Northwest Coast of America in 1791*, 58.

[47] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*. Appendix 2, 433.

On July 2, after establishing an onshore observatory, wooding, watering and making contact with the local native people, Malaspina was ready to investigate the source of the bay before them (figure 3.7).

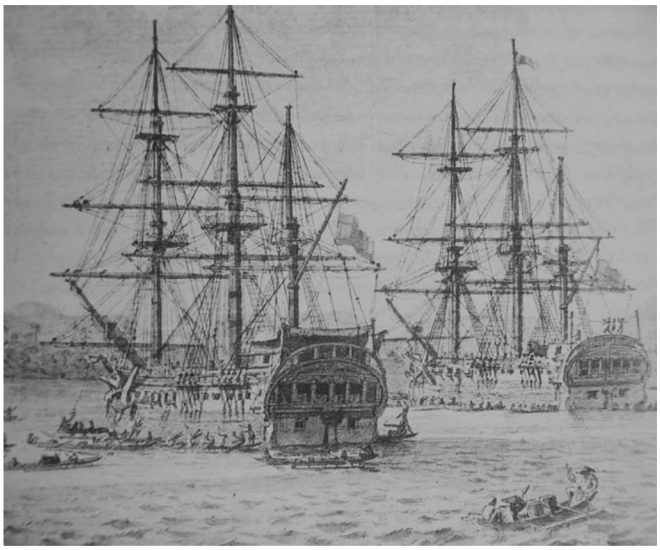

Figure 3.7. *Descubierta* and *Atrevida* anchored in Mulgrave (Yakutat). Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

With 15 day's supplies in the corvette's two small launches, Malaspina left Bustamante in command and along with a small group of sailors and marines, sailed into the unknown.[48] This was not an act without great risk; five years earlier the French Lapérouse expedition had lost 21 men in a similar exploration of Lituya Bay, and fifty years earlier the Russian Alexei Chirikov had lost two successive shore parties without a trace near present day Prince of Wales Island.

In a matter of only a few hours the Maldonado mystery was solved for Malaspina and all time as the water depth became shallow and the ominous sound of calving ice was heard just before a turn in the terrain revealed a foreboding and

[48] Ibid., 122-124.

towering wall of ice that was the terminus of the bay, today known as the Hubbard Glacier (Malaspina charted the bay, figure 3.8) .

Figure 3.8. Malaspina chart of Puerto del Desengaño (terminating in the modern Hubbard Glacier).
Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

Malaspina was, by all reports, disconsolate.[49] It must have weighed heavily on him to have been associated for all history in the final act of Ferrer Maldonado's charade. Unbeknownst to Malaspina and half a world away, the original re-discoverer of the Maldonado *Relatión* Juan Batista Munoz wrote:

> . . . the text by Ferrer about which you wish to have my opinion truly does not deserve much attention. I found it myself when I began my archival investigations in the archive of the Senor Duque del Infantado, and from that very moment felt uneasy about the authors veracity. . . .For the time

[49] Suria, *Journal of Tomas de Suria and His Voyage with Malaspina to the Northwest Coast of America in 1791*, 58.

> which lapsed ran all the way from 1588, when he claims to have completed it, to 1609 when he produced the account of it, indirectly and without mentioning that before that time he never uttered a word about the matter. It is incredible that any man should have kept silent for so long, particularly on the part of someone who had shown clear signs of being a greedy and vainglorious charlatan.[50]

Munoz continues with a condemnation of Phillipe Bauche de Neuville's memoir to the Paris Academe de Science: "M. Bauche took pains to give it publicity, and used the wealth of his talent and geographical erudition to add a glimmer of probability to a straightforward lie."[51]

It remains unclear if Malaspina was aware of Munoz's analysis, his comments were written 10 years after he had found the Maldonado Relation in response to the Bauche presentation at a time when Malaspina and his expedition were underway to follow the king's orders, orders which in light of Munoz's comments prove increasingly incredulous. Alessandro Malaspina named the inner bay: *Puerto del Desengano* (Port Disenchantment) and the outer entrance *Ferrer* "after the ancient mariner." [52]

On July 6, 1791, after more than a month at Mulgrave, the expedition weighed anchor and sailed north to examine the coast to Prince William Sound.

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[50] In 1781, several years before Malaspina's researchers found the Maldonado *Relatión* in preparation for the voyage, Spanish scholar Juan Batista Munoz had uncovered a copy while researching archives in the service of the crown, and commented on its veracity. Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*. document 5, 482.

[51] Ibid., 483.

[52] The name Ferrer has been lost on modern maps but the name Port Disenchantment has survived.

Contemporary interpretations of the Malaspina expedition's diversion to Mulgrave and beyond generally characterize it as a wild-goose-chase, or in some way a Spanish reaction to the similarly motivated explorations by Cook or Lapérouse to discover a northwest passage.[53] The extensive work done by the Malaspina expedition's "scientific" staff collecting botanical and biological samples, and studying the culture of the local Tlingit people at Mulgrave would have more than outweighed any lost opportunity in directing the expedition to the Northwest Coast in a rash adventure to secure the greatest of all geographic unicorns. Unfortunately the circumstances of Malaspina's future political misadventures in Madrid doomed all of the "scientific" material collected in this episode (and most of the rest of the journey) to be shelved or scattered for more than a century. However, what is ignored are the circumstances surrounding the redirection of the expedition to the Northwest Coast in 1791 and the *production* of the expedition as a result of that redirection - the expedition's hydrography/maps.

The time frame of the royal orders redirecting Malaspina to solve the riddle of the Maldonado *Relatión* raises questions. No one has ever been able to document the chain of events or arguments in Madrid that led to Malaspina's redirection to the Northwest Coast, beyond the Phillipe Bauche de Neuville memoir to the Paris Academe cited in the royal orders. The information (the Maldonado *Relatión*) was not new; far from it, it was nearly 200 years old. [54] What was new, or at least current, was the state of diplomacy between

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[53] Wagner's summary of the Malaspina voyage (although he could be excused for working from less complete sources that are available today) is stereotypical. Wagner, *The Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America to the year 1800, Volume I*, 228-229.

[54] In 1791 versions of the Maldonado Strait of Anian had appeared in maps for almost 50 years, an excellent example is seen in the Delisle map in figure 4.2 of the next chapter of this thesis.

England and Spain that was focused on the geographic region of the Northwest Coast. Spain and England avoided war for the moment (to Spain's great humiliation) through a diplomatic agreement reached before the dispatch of Malaspina's orders, but the terms of that diplomatic agreement, with regard to sovereign claims, was interpreted entirely differently by England and Spain (this would be demonstrated a year later when Vancouver and Quadra arrived in Nootka to settle the terms and reached a complete stalemate).

It was clearly Spain's view that the Nootka issue pertained only to the specific English claims at Nootka and did not extend to Spain's previous claims beyond Nootka in the region.[55] When Vancouver and Quadra sailed to Nootka in 1792 to negotiate (even though Vancouver denied that any negotiation was within his purview) they were both armed with the best maps of the region their respective navies could provide.[56] In 1791, at the very time that the initial Nootka agreement (and Spain's humiliation) was being negotiated in Europe, the best Spanish map makers on the high seas were all aboard either the *Descubierta* or the *Atrevida*. For Charles IV and his ministers (Floridablanca, Valdez et al) Malaspina represented Spain's best opportunity to possibly salvage humiliation and steal a march on England. Malaspina's utopian vision for an enlightened voyage of knowledge would be subordinated to the political and military priorities of the monarchy he loyally served.

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[55] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 373-375.

[56] Spain's first minister in the initial negotiations with England, Floridablanca was likewise supplied with voluminous maps and evidence of Spain's priority of claim. Ibid., 225.

CHAPTER 4: Measuring the Empire

I. A War of Maps

One of the proposed root functions of the *Viaje cientifico y politico alrededor del mundo* of 1789-1794 under the command of Alessandro Malaspina, was cartographic refinement, applying updated methods with more precise tools (figure 4.1) to improve the accuracy of existing marine charts or to create new charts where none existed previously. By the time the expedition was redirected to the Northwest Coast it had already spent the better part of two years painstakingly surveying the coastlines and harbors in what are today Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Equador, Panama and Mexico.

Figure 4.1. 18th century Marine chronometer and sextant used by the Spanish navy.
Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

The importance of accurate marine charts, and the technical refinement of navigational practices and tools seem, on the face of it, practical concerns, but cartography has also been identified as a largely political project, and 219 years after the Malaspina expedition the modern maps of Alaska and Canada still reflect a struggle between the polities of

England and Spain to define and claim space half-a-world away from their courts and capitals. Maps, including marine charts of the type being created by the Malaspina expedition for Spain, were political documents that would be employed by Spain in the consolidation, if not expansion of the Empire. The competition between the great powers in the 18th century to achieve cartographic and navigational perfection was nowhere better demonstrated than in the waters off the Northwest Coast in the time frame of this thesis, when ships and men from Spain and England often worked on their maps (and it could be argued, their political imaginaries) within sight of each other.

For two decades the Northwest Coast became the locus of unprecedented scientific and technical efforts by the greatest powers in the world, England, France and Spain; each in turn would send its most accomplished, best equipped and, indeed most elite naval expeditions to the waters of what is now Alaska and Canada. It is also generally acknowledged that the Spanish explorations commanded by Alessandro Malaspina were the best planned, equipped and executed of the three great European expeditions to the north coast (Cook, Lapérouse and Malaspina).[1] All three expeditions shared one other feature that distinguished them: the systematic production of cartography that was planned for distribution on a wide basis at the conclusion of each

[1] Malaspina seconded two of his officers to conduct an ancillary exploration of the inland waters accessed by what is now the strait of Juan de Fuca, while Malaspina proceeded further north, see Donald Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991); Donald Cutter, "Introduction," in *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, The Journal of the Voyage of Alejandro Malaspina, Volume 1*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2004), xxix-lxxvii.

voyage.[2] The distribution and publication of maps of state sponsored marine expeditions in England was well established by Cook's third voyage of 1776-1778 and would be continued by Cook's fellow English navy protégé George Vancouver in 1791-1795. Spain was notorious for its secretiveness regarding maps and routes, a policy that Spain's principle competitor during the 18th century, England, characterized in almost comic gravity. Archibald Menzies aboard the English Vancouver expedition described the Spanish concealing their discoveries with, "that odium of indolence & secrecy with which they have been long accused."[3]

The Spanish would be mocked for their reticence and caution, but among European powers of the early modern era, Spain was not alone in restricting access to its maps. Portugal, long held close its maps of valuable ultramarine discoveries in Africa, India and the East Indies, and the routes to reach them. The close competition between Spain and Portugal in the spice trade during the 15th and 16th centuries may have been at the root of Spanish secrecy surrounding its possessions, particularly with the "exchange" of navigational technology and skilled pilots between the Iberian neighbors before and

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[2] Spain had been distributing marine charts by this point, many of the officers of the Malaspina expedition including Malaspina himself had served in the previous Hydrographic survey of Spain's coastal waters. Malaspina stated in his proposal for the expedition of 1789-1794 to produce a printed report like that of Cook's third voyage (only larger) but the technical staff for the expedition was actually more like that of the French Lapérouse expedition than the English.

[3] The characterization of Hispanic jealous secrecy aligns with descriptions of the "Black Legend". William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1971); Archibald Menzies, "Menzies' Journal of Vancouver's Voyage, April to October 1792," in *Menzies' Journal of Vancouver's Voyage*, ed. C. F. Newcombe (Victoria: Archives of British Columbia, 1923), 226.

after the Portuguese Spanish unification of 1580-1620.[4] Russia also exercised legal restrictions on information concerning its explorations and maps of its discoveries in its far east. Maps of the Russian discoveries of Bering and Chirikof that were made by the Russian Hydrographic service in St. Petersberg were first revealed in the rest of Europe when a French cartographer in the service of Russia spirited copies of the Russian maps out of the country.[5]

The technical advancement of mapmaking by Europe's great powers, and the use of maps by states for delineating territorial frontiers, taxation units or cadastral mapping, is now recognized as an important characteristic of the early modern era.[6] The current "poststructuralist turn" in approaches to the history of cartography includes the fundamental argument that there was not a movement from "art to science" in that making maps more accurate through technical advancement is a side issue and only the narrowest of empirical interpretations.[7] Nevertheless, it is important to examine the

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[4] Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Discoverers* (New York: Random House, 1983), 267-9. This was particularly the case with regards to the location of the Tordesillas antemeridian before the treaty of Zaragosa when both Spain and Portugal vied for the sole world source of nutmeg and clove in the Malucca islands. Portugal reached them first from the west and then the Spanish expedition of Fernão Magalhães (Magellan) reached them from the east.

[5] L. Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific," *Imago Mundi* 3, no. 1 (1939): 87-99; J. R. Gibson, "A Notable Absence: The Lateness and Lameness of Russian Discovery and Exploration in the North Pacific, 1639-1803," in *From Maps to Metaphors: The Pacific World of George Vancouver*, ed. Robin Fischer and Hugh Johnston (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993), 353, 102.

[6] Jeremy Black, "Government, State, and Cartography: Mapping, Power, and Politics in Europe, 1650–1800," *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 43, no. 2 (January 1, 2008): 95-105.

[7] J. B. Harley, "Maps, Knowledge, and Power," in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 318.

technical developments in mapmaking in the second half of the 18th century, particularly in relation to hydrography/marine charting because of how advantages in the cartographic capabilities of competing states may have related to their individual "imperial projects."

The map in figure 4.2, produced by the Delisle house of Paris in 1752 is a useful starting point for an analysis of the cartographic development of Spain on the Northwest Coast. The representation of the area between the northern frontiers of Nueva Espana; the west coast of Hudson Bay and east coast of northern Asia is a combination of speculative elements (including the mythical "sea of the west" and northwest passage of admiral de Fonte) and the scant information from the Russian expedition of 1741. Iterations of this map would reappear from a variety of European sources well into the 1770s, and versions were carried by Cook on his third voyage to the region. Spanish cartography for much of the region portrayed in the Delisle map in figure 3 does not exist before the expeditions of the naval division of San Blas that began in 1774.

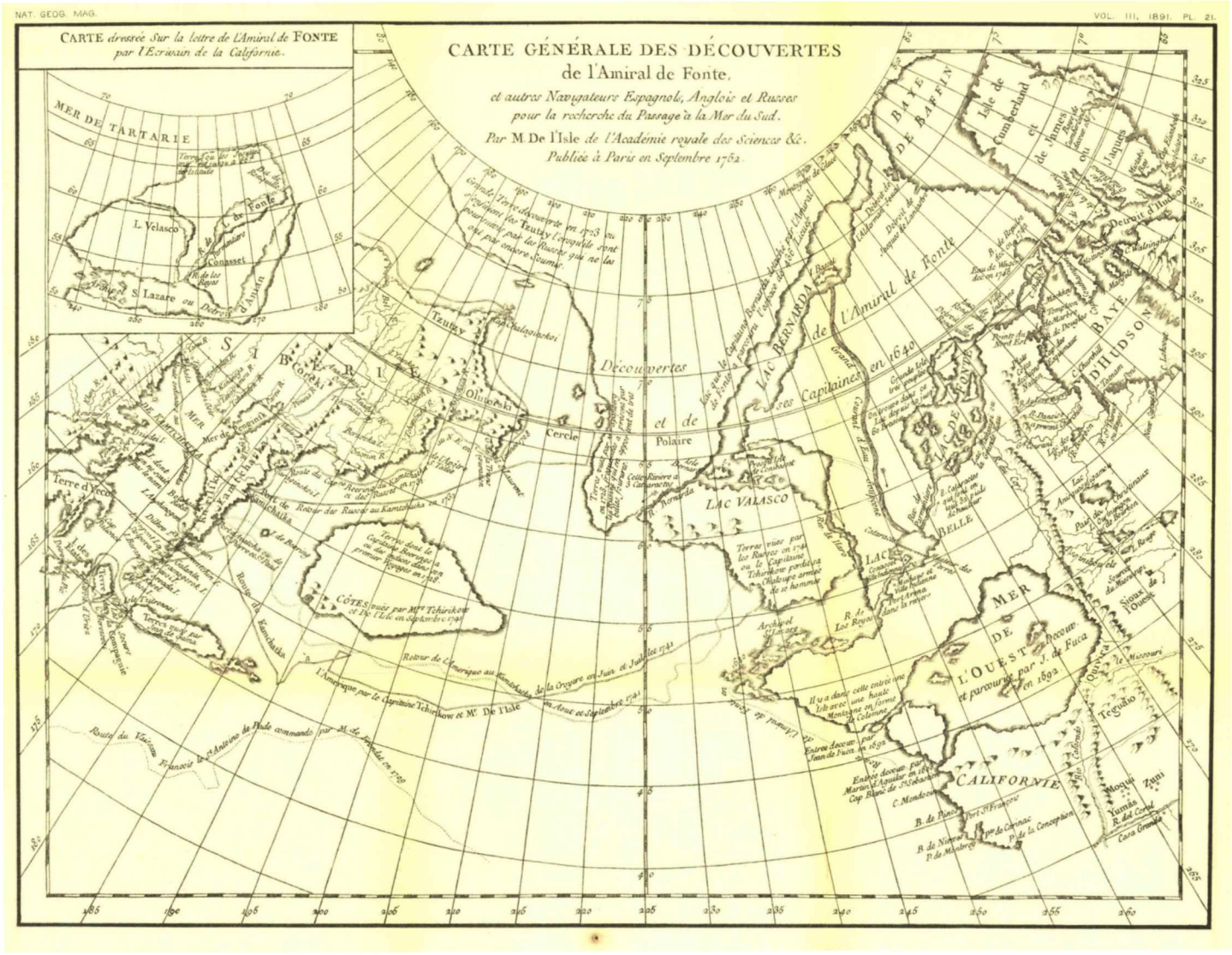

Figure 4.2. Map of the North Pacific produced by the Delisle's, based on Russian information from the Bering/Chirikof voyage , but also including speculative features –water passages from the Atlantic to Pacific oceans. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

II. Lines on a Sphere

For the great naval powers of Europe useful tools for navigation and reliable maps that would work with those tools would drive a technological race not unlike the 1960s space race. The motive for the race owed largely to several high profile naval disasters. In 1741 while Great Britain was at war with Spain, English Commodore George Anson led a squadron of eight ships on a mission to harass Spain's Pacific possessions. [8] After an arduous four month passage across the Atlantic and around Cape Horn in which disease broke-out among the crews, the weakened and scattered fleet limped into the poorly charted Pacific Ocean. In a series of blunders where Anson's flagship the *Centurian,* relying on incorrect maps and positional estimates jogged back and forth between the coast of Chile and a prearranged rendezvous site, the island of Juan Fernandez (mapped by Anson in figure 4.3), Anson's crew was ravaged by scurvy. As the *Centurian* finally maneuvered into the harbor of Juan Fernandez there were only eight men and a few officers capable of working the ship. Additional ships from the ill fated squadron drifted in over the course of the next month. The *HMS Tryal* arrived with 46 of its original 86 crew dead and only the captain, one officer and three seamen able to stand on deck. On July 23 *HMS Gloucester* was finally able to make anchorage, with a toll of 254 dead, leaving 92 men able to work the ship[9]

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[8] This was one of the five times England and Spain went to war in the 18th century, in this instance the "War of Jenkin's Ear" which became part of the broader "War of the Austrian Succession".

[9] Glyn Williams, *The Prize of All the Oceans* (New York: Viking, 1999), 65.

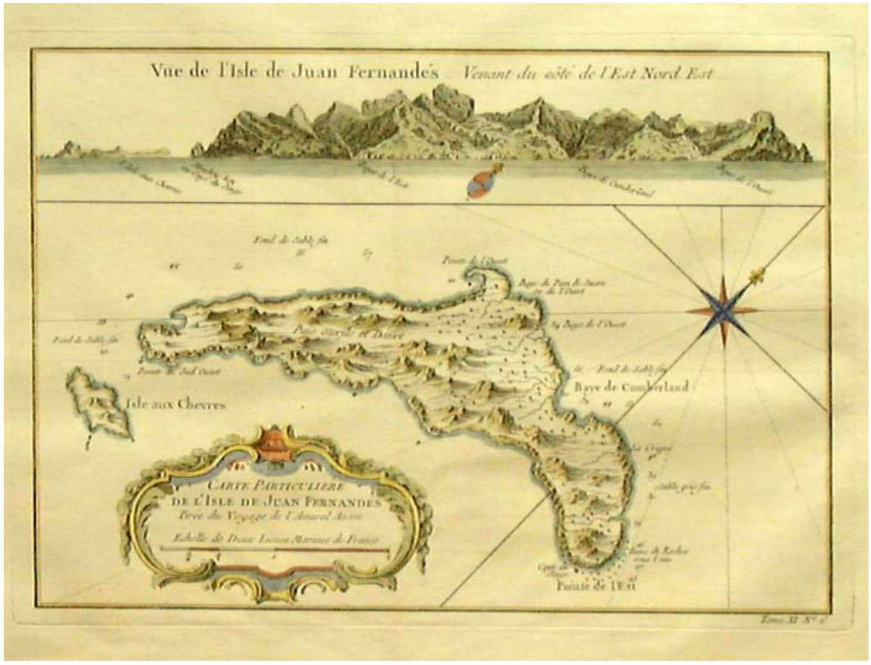

Figure 4.3. Island of Juan Fernandes ca. 1753, as recounted in the English Anson expedition. Source: Princeton University Historic Maps Collection

The story of Anson's fleet tragically illustrated the dilemma for even the most accomplished of Europe's mariners of the era. As W.E. May wrote: "The navigator in fact faced a double problem-where was he and where was the place he hoped to reach".[10] The dilemma of accurate positional navigation was compounded by a factor that would continue to dog transoceanic mariners well into the 19th century - the specter of scurvy. The poorly understood disease which is now recognized as a dietary deficiency of vitamin C, could strike any crew on any ship that subsisted on the typical diets of the

[10] W. E. May, *A History of Marine Navigation* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1973), 29-32.

early era of transoceanic exploration.[11] The only question was one of time. The longer a ship was in transit the greater the risk.

Portuguese and Spanish preeminence in navigation science after the *reconquista* was a product of the integration of astronomical methods that had been available for at least 1,000 years applied to new interpretations and observations. The angle of heavenly bodies above the horizon has been used as a method for determining position north or south since at least the time of the Greek Hipparchus (180-125 B.C.).[12] The European rediscovery of Ptolemy's book *Geographies* in the 15th century (a map of the known world was created from Ptolemy's "instructions", figure 4.4) was a catalyst and contributed to revised concepts on the character and proportions of the oceans, and perhaps most importantly introduced (or reintroduced) a system of an overlying reticule of vertical and horizontal lines that could be used to identify locations in a mathematical matrix fashion.[13]

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[11] Typical diets onboard transoceanic ships in the 18th century before Cook, consisted of grains, root vegetables, beans, bread and preserved meat, a menu almost devoid of vitamin C.

[12] J.B. Hewson, *A History of the Practice of Navigation* (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1963), 71.

[13] F.C. Domingues and L.F. Barreto, "The Recovery of Ptolemy's Geography in Renaissance Italy and its impact in Spain and Portugal in the period of the Discoveries." in *Geography, Cartography and Nautical Science in the Ranaissance*, ed. W. G. L. Randles (Burlington: Variorum, 2000), 1-5.

Figure 4.4. Map of the known world recreated from Ptolemy's "instructions" and including a matrix of longitudinal and latitudinal lines, 1482. Source: The British Library, c8449-08.

Using tools such as the *Astrolabe* and *Quarterstaff* combined with the magnetic compass, the pilots of Portugal (and later Spain) enjoyed success and navigational supremacy culminating with the discoveries of Dias, Columbus, De Gama, and finally the circumnavigation of the planet by Magellan in 1519. The pilots of the Renaissance era would measure the angle of the sun above the horizon with either an astrolabe or a quarterstaff and then try to sail that position of latitude east or west until they ran into land. This technique was perfected by the Portuguese and was called "sailing the latitude."[14] Dead reckoning was the English term for a related method of pilotage. Dead reckoning meant recording compass heading, time and estimated speed on a heading and

[14] E.G.R. Taylor, *The Haven Finding Art* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1958), 158-160.

then plotting that calculation on a chart as a measure of progress east and west.[15] Both techniques were prone to catastrophic error.

The problem of accurately determining longitude was recognized as one of the great scientific obstacles of the pre-modern period. Galileo is acknowledged as the first to arrive at a solution to determining position east/west via astronomical observation; the Galilean method utilized observation of the planet Jupiter's moons.[16] The occultation of the moons served as a highly accurate reference clock that when compared to an observation of local noon (the zenith of the sun's travel through the sky) could be used to calculate the degrees of longitude east or west of the point of origin. The method, although accurate, was impractical to implement; a relatively high magnification telescope with a stable mounting was needed, a combination particularly unsuitable for the deck of a vessel at sea. The Galilean method was however, employed by dry-land surveyors, notably Giovanni Cassini in 1679 for the land-based national survey of France.[17]

By the end of the 16th century substantial rewards were being offered by the major maritime powers to any person who produced a satisfactory method of finding longitude at sea, an indication that the problem was recognized at the highest levels of government. Phillip II of Spain offered the first reward, 1,000 crowns in 1598, which was shortly

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[15] Hewson, *A History of the Practice of Navigation*, 176.

[16] Taylor, *The Haven Finding Art*, 248.

[17] Laurence Bobis and James Lequeux. "Cassini, Rømer and the Velocity of Light." Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage 11, 2 (2008): 98.

followed by the United Provinces' offer of 10,000 florins.[18] After a notable sea disaster caused by navigational errors and involving a British Naval squadron in the early 1700s (before the Anson debacle), a bill was introduced in British Parliament, and in 1714 an act was passed "for providing a publick reward for such Person or Persons as shall discover the longitude at sea," and in France a *Prix Rouilles* was created in 1715 for scientific work pertaining to navigation and commerce.[19]

While it must be recognized that Portuguese and Spanish navigational science was sufficient to explore and circumnavigate the globe by the middle of the 16th century, no major innovations would be discovered or incorporated by the Spanish after that point; the Spanish merely refined and elaborated on principles that had been established since the Renaissance. On the Northwest Coast the deficiencies of the Spanish navigation methods were well demonstrated when in August 1779 the ships of the Arteaga-Quadra Expedition had advanced as far as the southern tip of modern Alaska's Kenai Peninsula (figure 4.5).[20] The expedition had been at sea for more than six months. A week earlier they had made landfall and performed an act of possession on what is today known as Hinchinbrook Island in Alaska's Prince William Sound. The Spaniards named the island *Santa Maria Magdelena* and named the harbor now known as Port Etches as *Santiago Apostol*. Cloudy skies prevented fixing position by observation, and dead reckoning was

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[18] Hewson, *A History of the Practice of Navigation*, 231.

[19] Taylor, *The Haven Finding Art*, 253-254.

[20] Warren Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 93-96.

recorded as 60° 11' North, 45° 34' West of San Blas which was in error approximately 4 ½ degrees or almost 160 miles to the west.[21]

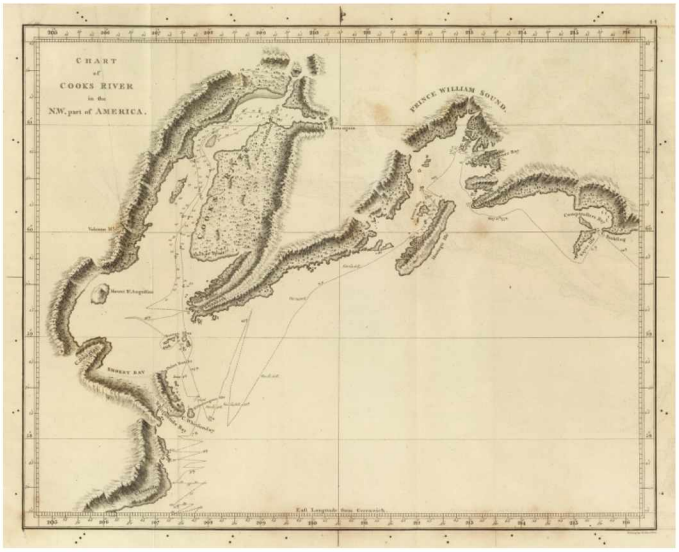

Figure 4.5. Alaska's Kenai Peninsula as mapped by Cook in 1778.
Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

The next leg of the voyage, south-west out of Prince William Sound was arduous. The winds and currents were unfavorable, visibility was poor. After hard sailing the expedition found haven behind an island they named Nuestra Senora de Rega for the patroness of the marine academy in Cadiz Spain where several of the officers had graduated.[22] The Spanish Pilots estimated their position by dead reckoning as 59° 19' North, 49° 5' West of San Blas which was 4 degrees in error approximately 110 miles west. A noon observation was made fixing the position 59° 8' North which was 3' in

[21] Don Ygnacio Arteaga, "Diary of the Commander, Don Ygnacio Arteaga," in *Spain claims Alaska, 1779*, ed. Katrina Moore Trans. (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1972), 96-99.

[22] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 97. The same Academy where Alessandro Malaspina later served as commandant.

error.[23] This would be the farthest north the flag of Spain had sailed in the Pacific Ocean to date. Unbeknownst to Arteaga and Quadra, Captain James Cook had surveyed the same island a little more than a year earlier.[24] The Cook expedition named the cape and island for one of the King's daughters on whose birthday it was sighted, and the observed the position of Elizabeth Island at 207° 45' East (less than 2' of error in longitude), and 59° 10' North, (less than 2 ' in error in Latitude).[25]

In practical terms both expeditions were sailing without accurate charts, so that errors of position would make little difference in unknown waters and unmapped coasts. But each expedition was also representative of the best level of its nation's technology at the time. The British could in 1778 measure latitude and longitude with accuracy unmatched by any navy on earth, while the Spanish were navigating with inferior tools and techniques almost 300 years old.

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[23] Arteaga, "Diary of the Commander, Don Ygnacio Arteaga."Don Ignacio Arteaga, *Diary of the Commander*, trans. Katrina Moore, (Fairbanks: University of Alaska, 1972), 100.

[24] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 91-93. Warren Cook submits that the Arteaga expedition was actually charged with apprehending the English Cook expedition, but this interpretation has been discounted in more contemporary scholarship, see James R. Gibson, "Nootka and Nutria Spain and the Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwest Coast," in *Malaspina' 92: Jornadas Internacionales Cadiz-1994*, ed. Mercedes Palau Baquero and Antonio Orozco Acuaviva (Cadiz: Real Academia Hispano-Americana, 1994), 137-159.

[25] James Cook, *The Journal*, ed. J.C. Beaglehole, vol. III, pt. 2 of The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 356-359. The longitude positions noted by Cook are calculated *East of Greenwich*.

III. Britannia Conquers Longitude

In the space of less than 40 years the British revolutionized navigation on land and sea with a series of developments principally achieved by Englishmen.

In order of chronology those developments were:

1. In 1731 John Hadley of England invented (simultaneously with glazier Thomas Godfrey of Philadelphia) the modern sextant, an instrument that could measure the angle of celestial objects above the visible horizon or between each other.[26]
2. In 1737 an English clockmaker, John Harrison completed a timepiece that was capable of maintaining accuracy for extended voyages at sea so that it could be used for determining longitude based on a simple observation of local solar noon.[27]
3. In 1763 England's Astronomer-Royal Neville Maskelyne introduced "The British Mariners Guide" that included a set of tables based on the work of German Astronomer Tobias Mayer, Swiss mathematician Ernst Euler and almost a century of observations from the Royal observatory in Greenwich that made it possible to calculate longitude by determining the angle between the moon and certain stars.[28]

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[26] Taylor, *The Haven Finding Art*, 256-257.

[27] Hewson, *A History of the Practice of Navigation*, 241-249.

[28] Ibid., 235-237.

4. In 1774 British instrument maker Jesse Ramsden perfected his circle dividing engine (figure 4.6), a device that made it possible to engrave mathematically precise divisions on a circular arc such as used in theodolites, astronomic telescope mounts and marine sextants.[29]

Figure 4.6. Ramsden's circle dividing engine. Source: Smithsonian NMAH.

The third Cook expedition was equipped with all of these innovations including a Kendall Chronometer (one of the first copies of the original Harrison Chronometer), Ramsden built sextants and the refined lunar-distance tables produced by the royal

[29] Allan Chapman, "Scientific Instruments and Industrial Innovation: The Achievement of Jesse Ramsden," in *Making Instruments Count: Essays on Historical Scientific Instruments Presented to Gerard L'Estrange Turner*, ed. R.G.W. Anderson, J.A. Bennett, and W.F. Ryan. (Hampshire: Variorum, 1993), 422. See figure 4.7.

observatory in Greenwich.[30] Certain officers of the Cook expedition were charged with making observations using these instruments specifically for the Royal Observatory.[31] In theory other sea-going nations could have had access to three of these developments; the lunar tables, the marine chronometer (French clockmakers including Roy and Berthoud were very close behind Harrison's achievement) and the sextant, but in 1779 no one in Europe could produce a sextant with the precision of the Ramsden instruments. The importance of the Ramsden sextant (figure 4.7) was in the employment of the lunar-distance-table longitude method which required angular measurements of higher precision than the chronometer-LHA (local hour angle) longitude method, but the overall precision of the Ramsden sextant would yield more accurate results in any measurement.[32]

The Spanish Arteaga/Bodega expedition of 1779 lacked a chronometer, lunar tables and certainly a Ramsden sextant. The notation in the Spanish logs referred to latitude measurements by observation (weather permitting) but longitude measurements were always qualified as estimated.[33] The precision of the Spanish latitude measurements were also inferior to those of the

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[30] *calendar of documents*, ed. J.C. Beaglehole, vol. III, pt. 2 of *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 1499. A Ramsden sextant of the type used in the Cook third expedition can be seen in figure 4.8.

[31] Ibid., 1490.

[32] Allan Chapman, *"Scientific Instruments and Industrial Innovation: The Achievement of Jesse Ramsden,"* 420-421.

[33] Arteaga, "Diary of the Commander, Don Ygnacio Arteaga." Positional notes were taken from the Arteaga journal of the voyage, Spanish practice was to make observations at least 3 times a day, morning, noon and early evening. If the sky was obscured the entries noted estimated positions.

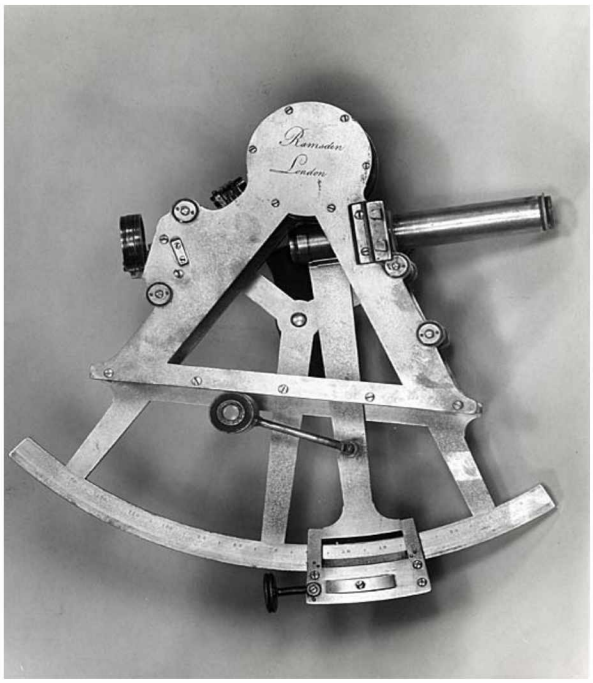

Figure 4.7. English Ramsden sextant of the late 18th century.
Source: Smithsonian NMAH.

British. Months after the expedition the Spanish Commander would admit that their observations were almost always based on estimates, as precision instruments were then not available.[34]

The other obvious technological advantage held by the British had nothing to do with navigation. On August 2, 1779 while the two Spanish ships were still anchored behind *isla Nuestra Senora de Rega* (Elizabeth Island), Commander Arteaga called a council of his officers. Scurvy had appeared onboard the expedition weeks earlier; second in command Quadra Y Bodega wrote: "He [Commander Arteaga] thus found it advisable

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[34] Luisa Martin-Meras and Dolores Higueras, "Spanish Cartographic Surveys of the Northwest Coast in the XVIIIth Century; The Corps of Naval Steersmen," in *To the totem shore : the Spanish presence on the Northwest coast* (Madrid: Ediciones El Viso, 1986), 112.

for us to set sail from this island toward one of the presidios of the coast of Monterrey, having in mind also the miserable condition of his people with the scurvy, of which contagious illness eight men had died."[35]

As Quadra revealed in 1779, the Spanish Navy still believed that scurvy was a contagious disease, whereas Cook had for all practical purposes conquered scurvy through additions to his crew's diets including spruce beer, sauerkraut, fresh vegetables and fruit.[36] Spanish (and Russian) ships in this era often took the precaution of crewing their ships sometimes double or more the regular complement for long voyages to assure that enough healthy crew would be available to man the ships once the inevitable disease began taking its toll.[37] While it can be argued that the navigation of the globe had been achieved without the aid of an accurate method to determine longitude or knowledge regarding the cause and treatment of scurvy, there can be little argument that the speed and security allowed by improved navigation methods saved lives and extended the practical range of voyages, and thereby the practical range of projected European power. Even the European power closest to the Northwest Coast, Russia, suffered the severest depredations of scurvy in its explorations.

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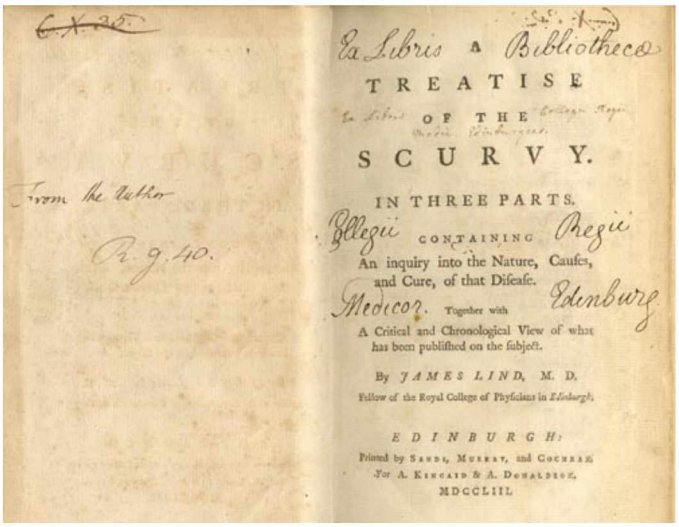
[35] Freeman Tovell, *At the far reaches of empire: the life of Juan Francisco De La Bodega Y Quadra* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 106.

[36] James Cook, The Journal, ed. J.C. Beaglehole, vol. III, pt. 2 of *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery* (London: Cambridge University Press,1967), 479. Scottish Physician James Lind is now credited with linking scurvy to diet, and wrote a treatise on scurvy in 1754, but his findings were broadly ignored. The efficacy of Cook's dietary measures continue to be debated, yet Cook's evident success at reducing scurvy and the success of mariners such as Malaspina that emulated Cook are a matter of record.

[37] Gibson, "A Notable Absence: The Lateness and Lameness of Russian Discovery and Exploration in the North Pacific, 1639-1803." 98.

Spain likewise was hobbled in all of its early voyages to the North coast originating in San Blas before the adoption of the modernized navigational methods. The main factor retarding the early Spanish voyages were the contrary winds for sailing north when staying within visual range of the west coast. The difficulties in this route could add months to the length of the total voyage, long enough to permit the onset of scurvy.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TREATISE

OF THE

SCURVY.

IN THREE PARTS.

CONTAINING

An inquiry into the Nature, Cauſes, and Cure, of that Diſeaſe.

Together with

A Critical and Chronological View of what has been publiſhed on the ſubject.

By JAMES LIND, M. D.

Fellow of the Royal College of Phyſicians in Edinburgh.

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From the Author

Figure 4.8. Scottish physician James Lind is credited with linking scurvy to diet well before the Cook voyages. Source: University of Virginia, Historical Collections at the Claude Moore Health Sciences Library.

Malaspina, emulating Captain Cook, paid careful attention to the diet of his crew (although Cook, Lapérouse, Malaspina and all European science did not recognize the link to vitamin C that remained undefined until the 20th century): ". . .with this in mind we took Sauerkraut and pork, salted according to both the recipes favoured by Captain Cook and the Comte de La Perouse. We made great use of the wine of San lucar, for which Chilean wine was used as a substitute, and, lastly, grog-that is watered spirits. Hot meals and gazpacho were served alternately and the use of alcoholic beverages was

varied, as were mealtimes, according to climate and season."[38] The Spanish pilots of the naval division of San Blas established that the best and quickest route to the North coast from Nuevo Espana (either San Blas or Acapulco) was to sail due west for almost two weeks to intercept a system of prevailing offshore northerly winds, a route that required an extraordinary degree of commitment and seamanship if attempted without a means to calculate longitude positions.

IV. Spain's Hydrography

One of the best measures of the success of the Bourbon reforms in Spain can be demonstrated in the quality of the maps that were produced by Spain on the Northwest Coast. Malaspina employed similar methods in his mapping as those used in the Spanish coastal survey that began in 1783 and on which Malaspina as well as many of his subordinate officers had served.[39] In brief the technique involved following steps: 1) establishing a "base" through a combination of celestial observation and chronometer regulation, and 2) Plotting land features by azimuth observations from on board the ships and then calculating their distance through use of trigonometric triangulation using a

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[38] Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), 'Introduccion' xci. It seems unlikely from records of the expedition's provisions that diet alone could account for the difference in the scurvy rates compared to earlier voyages, yet Malaspina is almost as successful as Cook and LePerouse in combating the disease.

[39] Cutter, "Introduction," xxxviii-xl.The Atlas maritime de Espana project was directed by *Vicente Tofino*, Malaspina worked on the project in 1785 and 1787, Alcala-Galliano in 1784, Bauza in 1786 and Espinoza in 1783-1784, so that the core of navigators and cartographers on the Malaspina expedition had all done duty on Spain's greatest previous State mapping project.

measured distance from the established "base." The process was understandably labor and time intensive in 100 foot square rigged sailing ships.[40]

Several examples of Spanish maps from the period are now available in high resolution digital formats which lend themselves to analysis with digital software tools. The tool that is used here is MapAnalyst, which provides a method for comparing maps, and it was specifically designed for comparing old maps to new maps. The question of why we should analyze and compare maps was addressed by Blakemore and Harley who identified three possible applications: "First, a map historian may accomplish a series of comparative analysis to demonstrate the technical virtuosity of the cartographer(s), or to determine how accuracy changed over time for a given area. Second, a cartometric study may yield information about geodetic bases, techniques of surveying, the projection, or source maps used to compile the map. Third, an accuracy analysis can assist a historical geographer when extracting, interpreting, and evaluating the information quality of a historical map."[41]

The basic technique in using MapAnalyst is to establish control points in two different maps, the MapAnalyst application then computes distortion grids that graphically represent the planimetric accuracy of the one map to the other. [42] Planimetric

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[40] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I,* ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), Appendix 2, 325-329.

[41] Michael J. Blakemore and J.B. Harley, "Concepts in the history of cartography: a review and perspective," *Cartographica* 17, no. 4 (1980): 17-23; 60-68.

[42] Bernhard Jenny, "MapAnalyst - A digital tool for the analysis of the planimetric accuracy of historical maps," *Methods* 1, no. 3 (2006): 240.

accuracy has been defined as: " the extent to which distances and bearings between identifiable objects coincide with their true value."[43] The graphical visualization of a map's geometric accuracy, in the distortion grids created by MapAnayst represent imprecision from two possible sources: "First, the cartographer may have committed errors at the different stages of map production (e.g. surveying and data compilation, map drawing, and reproduction); second, it is well known that paper or other media which store maps are not inert materials, i.e. shrinking and stretching distort the map's geometry." [44] Shrinking and stretching of a maps media or substrate, however, is revealed in distortion grids in identifiable ways and seldom masks itself as the type of positional errors anticipated in old maps. By sharing geographic reference points on an old map and a new map, and then plotting those shared points on a 2 dimensional distance-spaced-grid, the displacement or distortion of the points in one map when compared to the other is a graphic representation of a difference, or error in accuracy (when making the original map).

I chose to analyze two sets of maps, the first set are from the Puerto de Mulgrave (Yakutat) area: a map produced by the Malaspina expedition in 1791 (figure 4.9) and a map of the same area published 1844 in a French marine atlas (figure 4.10).

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[43] Bernhard Jenny, Adrian Weber, and Lorenz Hurni, "Visualizing the Planimetric Accuracy of Historical Maps with MapAnalyst," *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 89-94. Jenny, one of the designers of the MapAnalyst software provides an instructive discussion of the principles and applications of MapAnalyst.

[44] Jenny, "MapAnalyst - A digital tool for the analysis of the planimetric accuracy of historical maps." 1.

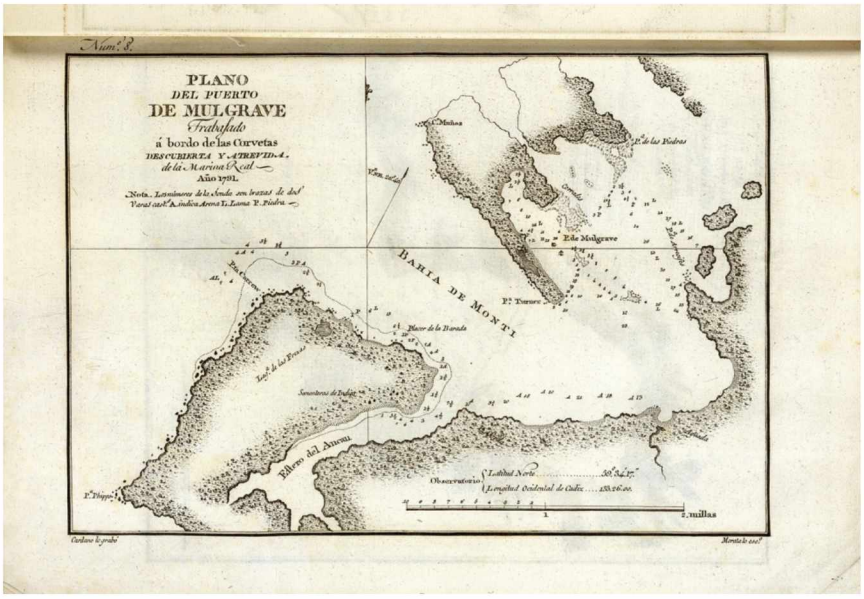

Figure 4.9. Plano del Puerto de Mulgrave as mapped by the Malaspina expedition in 1791. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

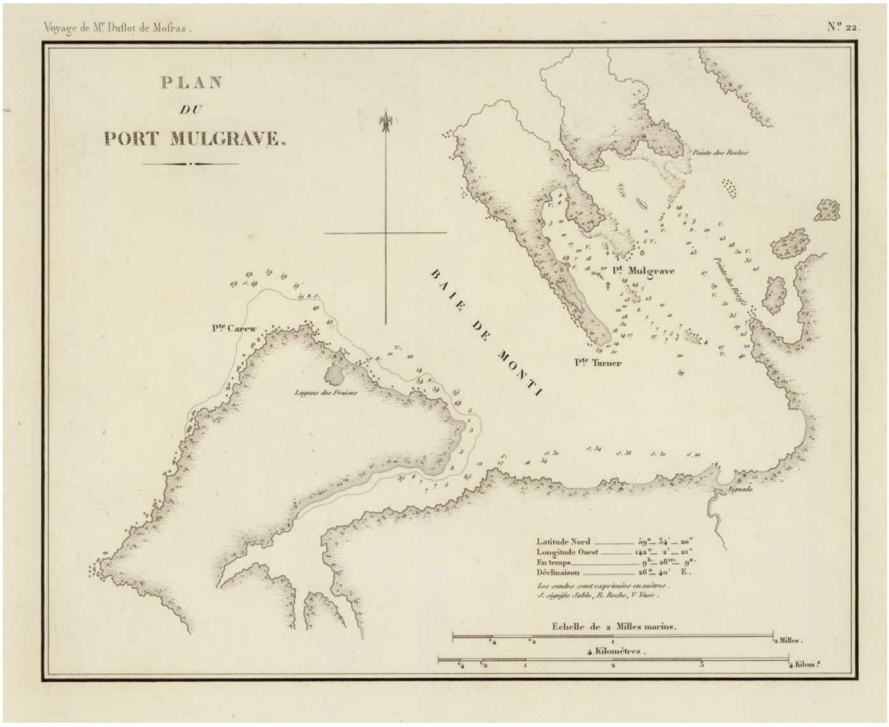

Figure 4.10. Port Mulgrave published in a French marine atlas of 1844. Source: *Exploration Du Territoire De L'Oregon, Des Californies Et De La Mer Vermeille, Executee Pendant Les Annees 1840, 1841 Et 1842,Par M. Duflot De Mofras.*

Superimposing the images of the two maps (figure 4.13) it is clear that the French map of Puerto de Mulgrave is a copy of the Spanish map from the 1791 Malaspina expedition. The elongation of the distortion grid in the far right area of the map reveal that the French map is probably not a "restrike" of the original Spanish map but a transcribed and re-engraved facsimile.[45] The second set of maps examined with the MapAnalyst software compares the map making of the English expedition of 1791-1795 commanded by George Vancouver that mapped (and named) large portions of the Northwest Coast. The map in figure 4.14 covers the Pacific Northwest coast from what is now Oregon to the edge of the Queen Charlotte Islands. In Figure 4.15 is the same area as mapped by the Spanish in 1792 by the *Sutil* and *Mexicana* commanded by Cayetano Valdés y Flores Bazán and Dionisio Alcalá Galiano. Galliano and Valdés were staff officers on the Malaspina expedition that were dispatched by Malaspina in ships from the San Blas naval division to complete surveys of what is now the strait of Juan de Fuca and the inland behind Vancouver Island (originally "Vancouver and Quadra's Island"). [46] The two maps, figure 4.14 and 4.15, for which most of the surveying was done almost simultaneously in 1792, have obvious stylistic differences but close examination of the distortion grids produced by the MapAnalyst software show that they both share planimetric errors in the same areas (the distortion grids are superimposed in figure 4.18).

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[45] The map printing technology of the late 18th century involved engraving copies of hand drawn manuscript-maps onto copper plates. Many French re-strikes and copies of Spanish maps begin appearing after the turn of the 18th century.

[46] The voyage of the *Mexicana* and *Sutil* are often treated as separate to the Malaspina Expedition, but it is important to recognize that both Valdes and Galliano were key staff officers for Malaspina and thoroughly trained in best survey techniques aboard the *Descubierta* and *Atrevida* for the previous 3 years, see Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792*.

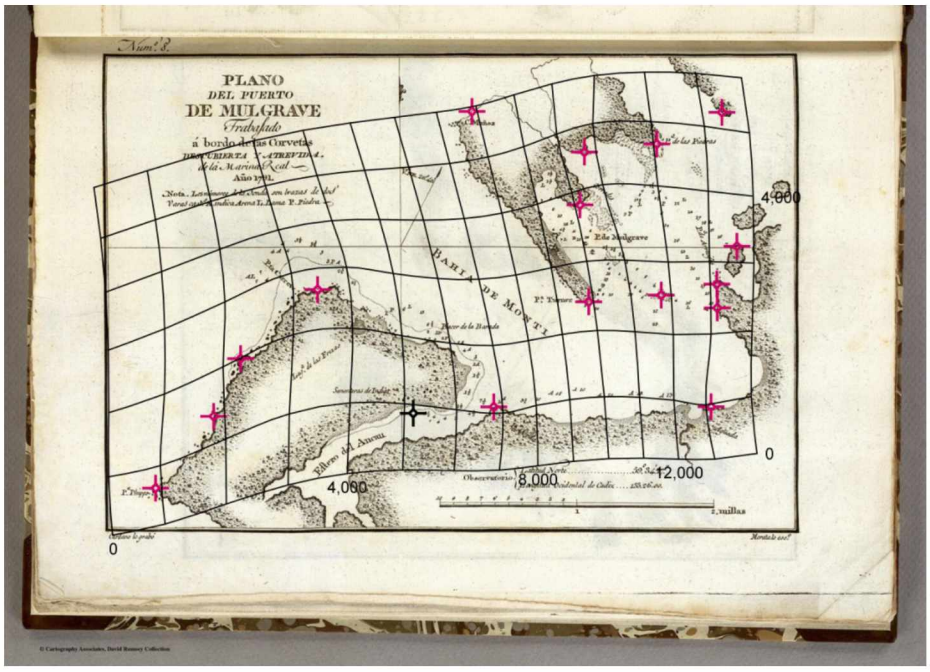

Figure 4.11. Puerto de Mulgrave 1791, with 1000 meter distortion grid.

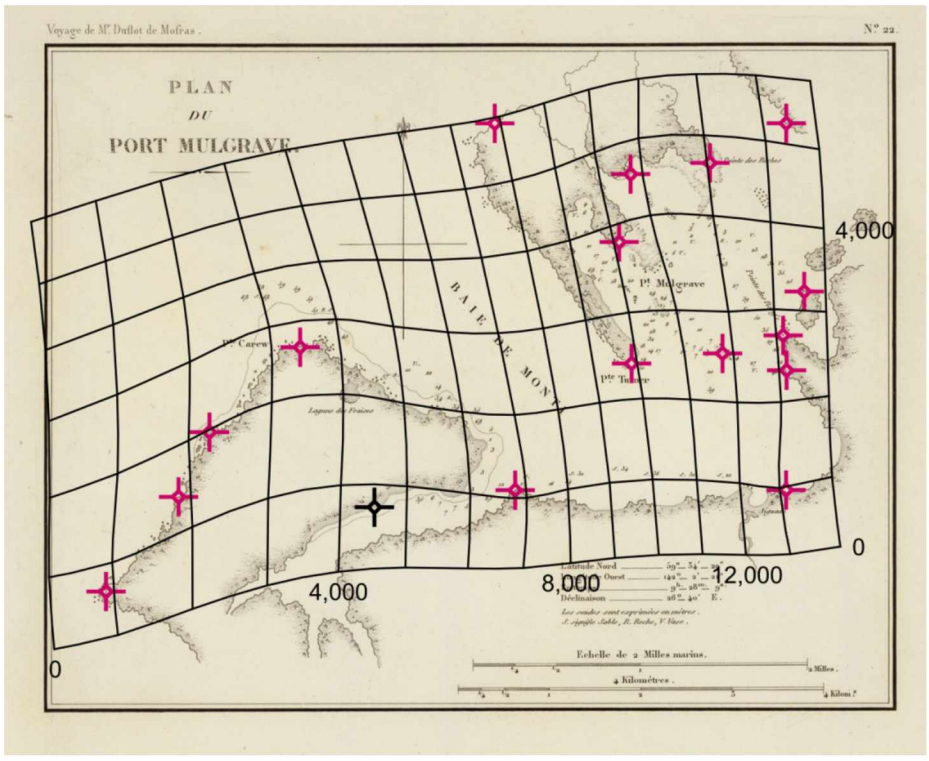

Figure 4.12. Port Mulgrave 1844, with 1000 meter distortion grid using same reference points as in figure 4.12.

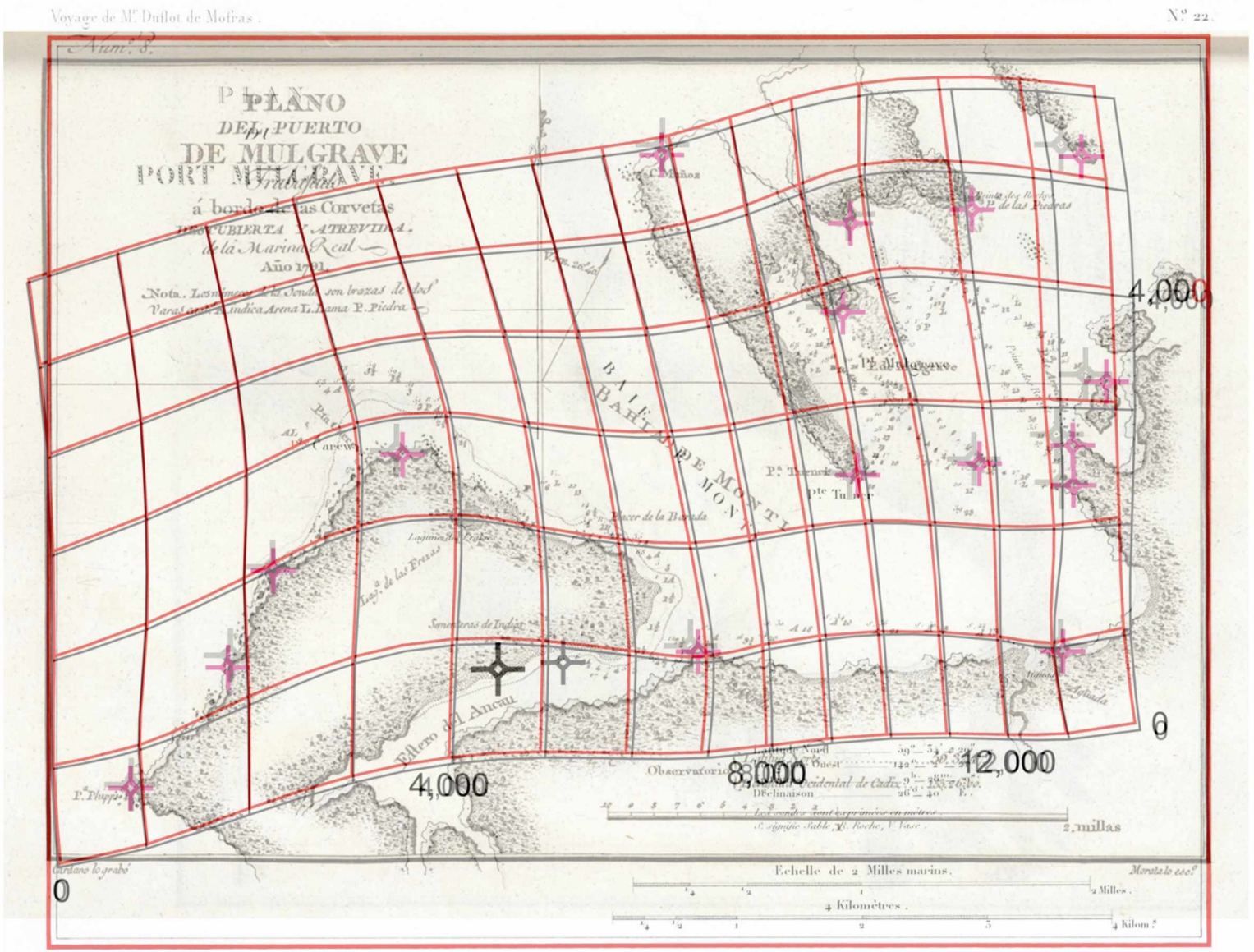

Figure 4.13. The French 1844 map with distortion grid (red) superimposed over the Spanish 1791 map.

Figure 4.14. The Pacific Northwest mapped by the English, 1792-1793. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

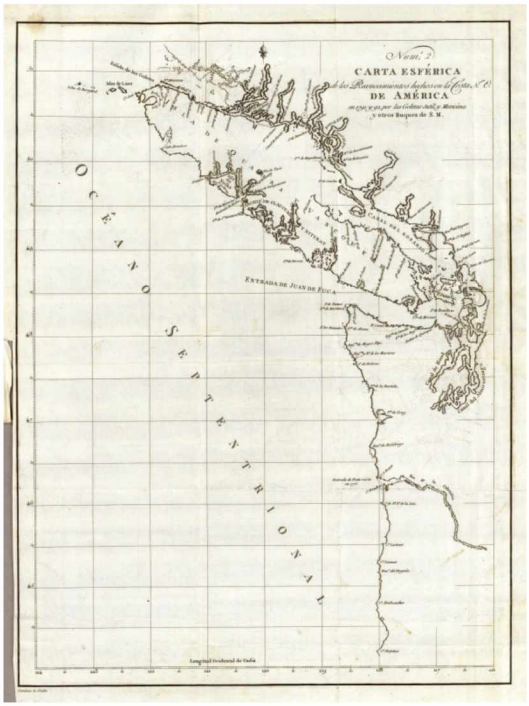

Figure 4.15. The Pacific Northwest mapped by the Spanish, 1792. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

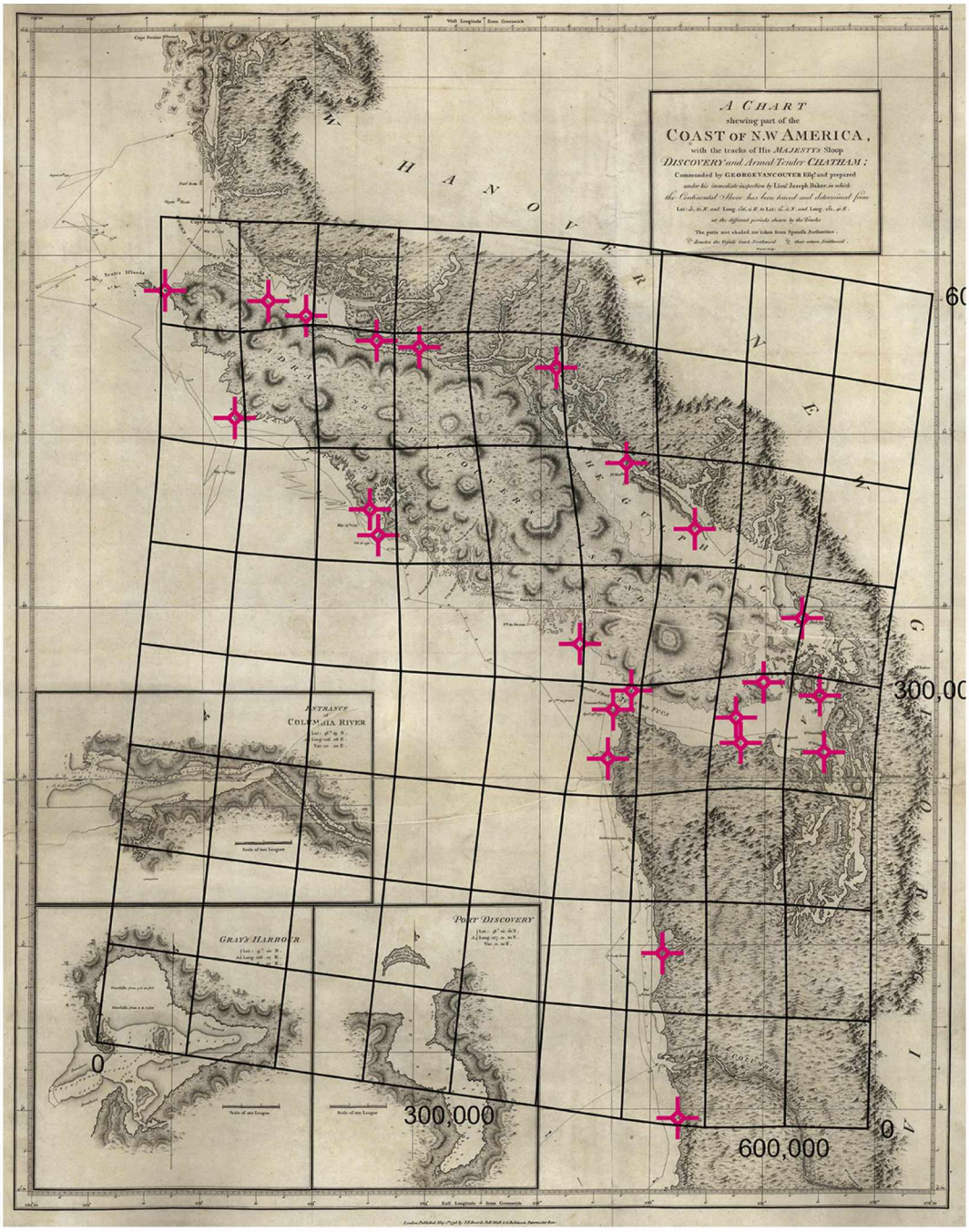

Figure 4.16. The English map with 75000 meter distortion grid.

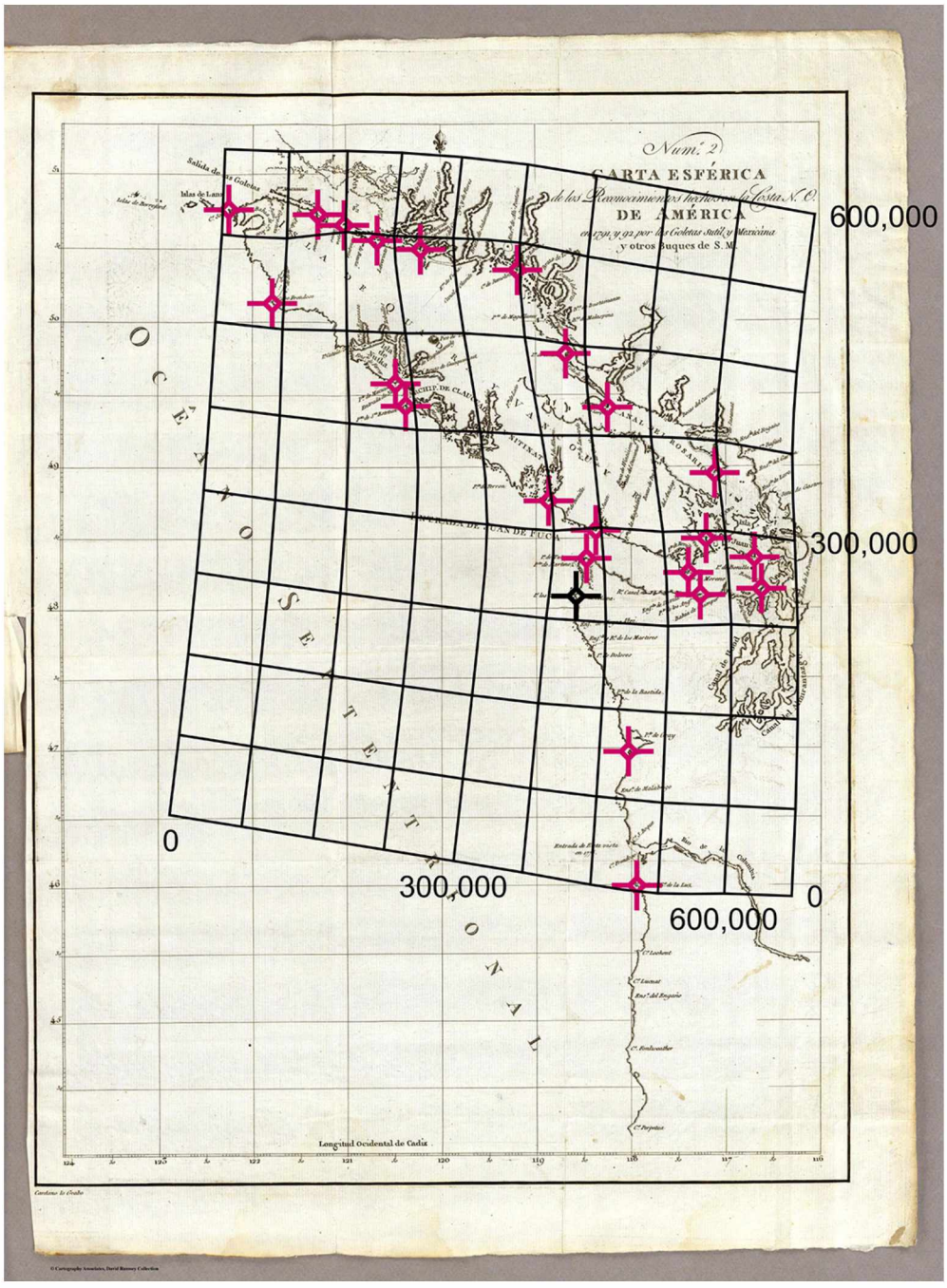

Figure 4.17. The Spanish map with a 75000 meter distortion grid.

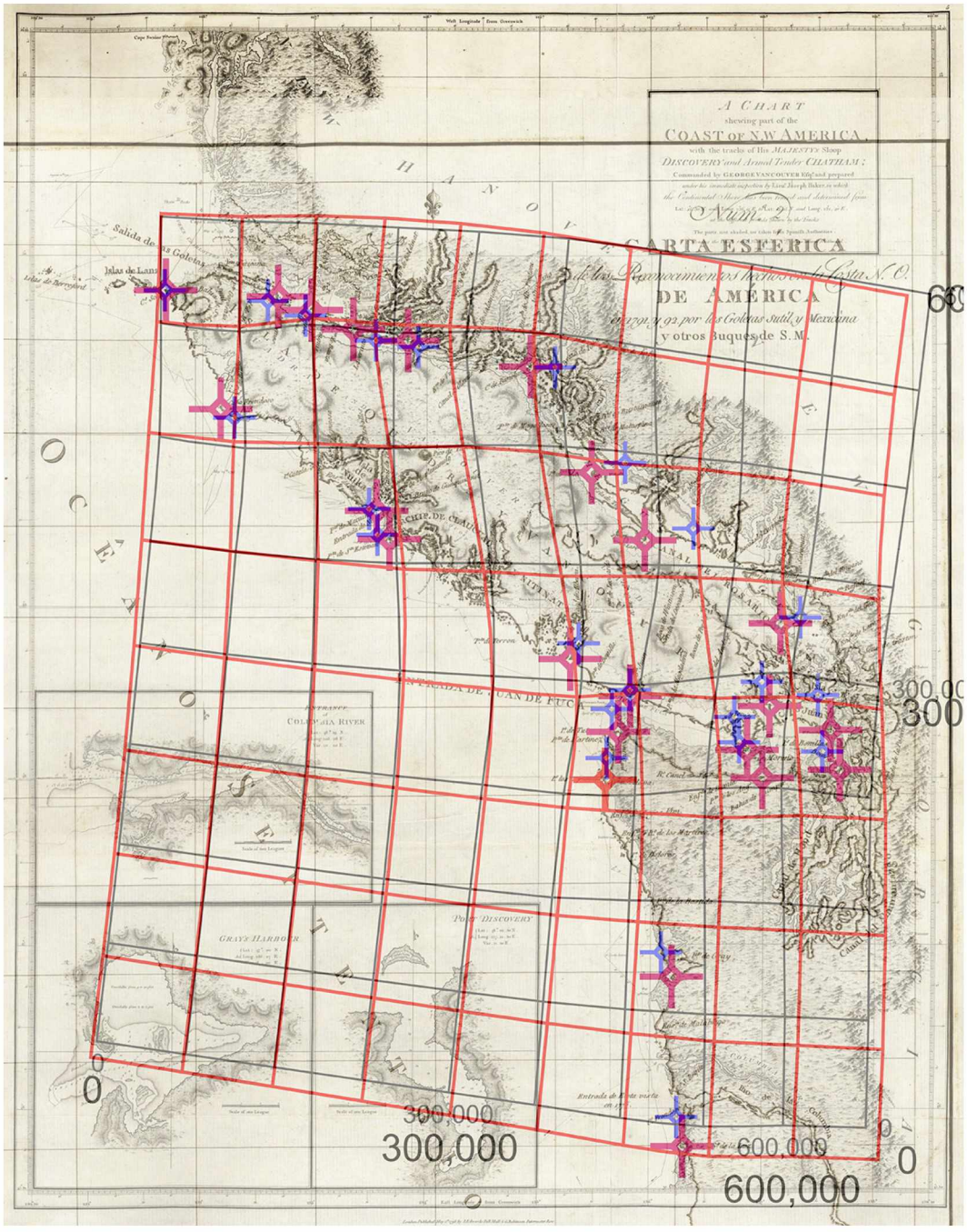

Figure 4.18. Spanish and English maps superimposed. Spanish distortion grid in red, English distortion grid in black.

The areas with the most problems were in constricted inland waterways relatively distant from Nootka Sound. Nootka Sound was, at the time of the mapping projects, the most established harbor north of Monterey, Alta California. Both the English and the Spanish had established the position of Nootka through astronomical observation to a high degree of confidence.[47] Nootka was the "base" for both surveys and as a result, because both survey expeditions were working with virtually identical tools and capabilities, both maps are of a comparable accuracy and show relatively similar errors.

These results demonstrate graphically, that by the time of the Malaspina expedition the English advantages in positional accuracy witnessed twelve years earlier had been equaled, if not exceeded by the Spanish. The effort to reach this achievement belies the importance that Bourbon Spain placed on naval operations at the very farthest reaches of the Empire, defining that Empire in cartographic terms, and the underlying importance of planimetric accurate maps as not only navigational tools but (as would be demonstrated in the Nootka negotiations with England) as diplomatic instruments for state and ultimately imperial projects.

Spains maps in this period (and Spains mapping by Malaspina) reveal technological proficiency and the capability to project state power and define imperial space in the most remote corners of the world.

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[47] Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: Hakluyt Soc., 2003), 178. Malaspina fixed Nootka's position as 129° 36' West of Paris by chronometer, over the course of the expeditions stay in Nootka in mid-August 1791 this figure was refined to 120° 18' West of Cadiz and 49° 35' N. The modern position is given as 126° 36' W (Greenwich) 49° 35' N. With Cadiz at 6° 18' West of Greenwich the Malaspina expedition's position figure was very accurate indeed.

CONCLUSION: Colliding Empires and Colliding Visions

I. North of Mulgrave

After leaving Port Mulgrave the Malaspina Expedition proceeded north with the intention of revealing the nature of several stretches of the coast that had been missed by previous European explorers (Spanish maps such as the one in figure 5.1, were composites of Spanish map data). In A.G. Luna's 2000 thesis *"Spanish Exploration in the North Pacific and its Effect on Alaska Place Names"* The author describes the expedition as failing at its penetration of Prince William Sound between July 6th and July 26th.[1] But although several journalists onboard the *Descubierta* including the artist Tomas Suria, noted that Malaspina's demeanor had turned darker after the revelations of *Puerto Disengenho*, Malaspina's own words are consistent with the approach he followed in the similarly capricious waters along the Straits of Magellan, where Malaspina felt that previous English and Spanish expeditions had surveyed the coastline to a degree of perfection that the risks to overall success of the mission outweighed any potential additions to the cartographic record.[2]

For anyone who has sailed the Alaskan coastal waters between Yakutat and Dutch Harbor it remains a monument to nautical achievement that any of the mariners of the

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[1] A. G. Luna, "Spanish Exploration in the North Pacific and its Effect on Alaska Place Names" (University of Alaska Fairbanks, 2000), 121.

[2] Malaspina's entries regarding his decision to skirt Cape Horn and decline a survey of the Strait of Magellan are: Alessandro Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume I*, ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), 117-119.

18th century could have negotiated the contrary winds and tides in square rigged sailing ships, and what may have been possible for LePerouse in July of 1786 or Fidalgo in 1790 may not have been possible at all in July 1791. Contrary to Luna's characterization, the expedition labored for almost two weeks to navigate the entrance to Prince William Sound all of the time searching cautiously for evidence of a passage to the east while at the same time refining the work of the Fidalgo survey of the previous season and the Cook Expedition of 1778.[3]

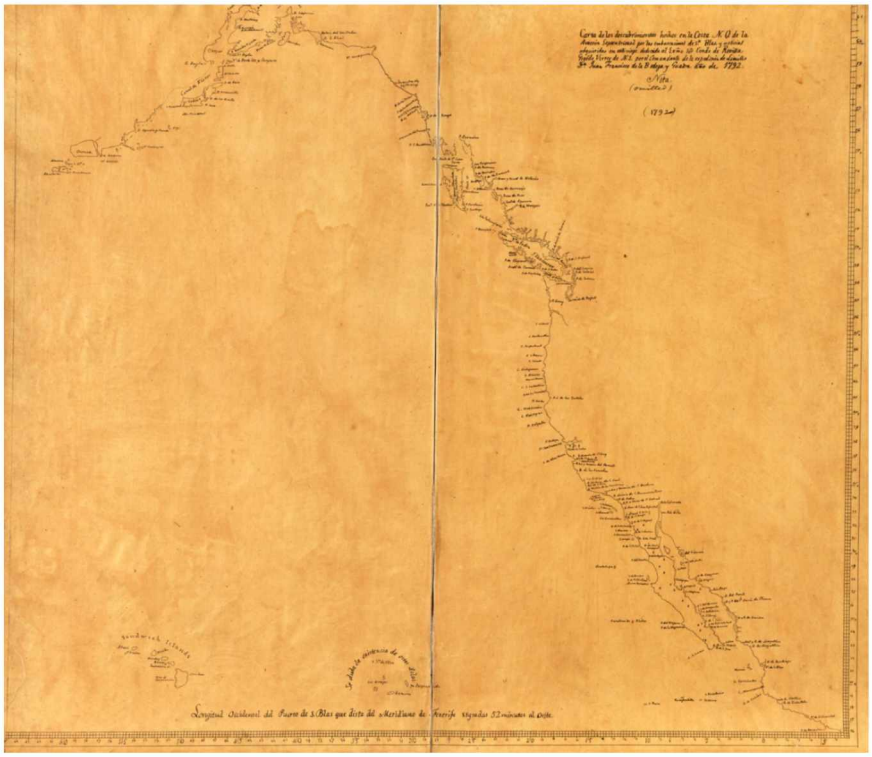

Figure 5.1. Map of the Spanish west coast of North America, ca. 1792. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection.

After hard sailing for almost 3 weeks Malaspina's journal entry for the 26th of July 1791 communicates an air of finality:

[3] Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition 1789-1794, Journal of the Voyage, Volume II,* ed. Andrew David et al. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001), 144-145. The Salvador Fidalgo expedition from the naval division of San Blas sailed the Northwest Coast as far as Kodiak Island in May to November of 1790.

> Indeed the more we examined these parts, the low ground running continuously along the shore and the higher parts running unbroken, without even a valley or a river of medium size, terminating in the noble and natural architecture of Mount St. Elias at one end and Cape Fairweather at the other, the more we were surprised at either the source of Ferrer Maldonado's report or the ease with which M. de Bauche gave it support so publicly expressed and so widely echoed. If our present survey, being subsequent to that of the distinguished English navigator (Malaspina refers to Cook), does not allow us the complacency of considering it as important for the progress of geography, let us hope at least it will put an end in the future to new speculations on the existence of a passage in these latitudes, and not risk so many lives and fortunes in such investigations.[4]

Malaspina's words were written after lying at anchor for several days after being becalmed and forced to tow the ships by oar into water shallow enough to hold anchors. With the first favorable wind on the 27th of July Malaspina steered the expedition South East for Mt. Fairweather and on to Nootka ending the far northern leg of the Voyage and unknowingly closing a chapter on Spanish activities north of 55 degree latitude in the Americas.[5]

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[4] Ibid.,159.

[5] Jacinto Caamaño, serving under Quadra y Bodega surveyed the complicated coastline south of Bucareli Sound to Nootka in the summer of 1792. Ibid., 346-348.

II. Creating Imperial Space

Warren Cook identifies the Malaspina voyage to Mulgrave and beyond as the Apogee of Spanish achievement in Northwest Coast waters.[6] Drury likewise focuses on the work of the Spanish expeditions to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the "Salish Sea" which he contrasts with the contemporaneous activities in the same locale by the English.[7] Both historians (Cook and Drury) recognized the potent symbolism of the Malaspina Expedition as a projection of imperial European power; the difference between the two approaches (and Drury does largely build on Cook's scholarship as reflected in his citations) is Drury's identification of the function of map-making by both the Spanish and English in this region and in this time frame. For the Malaspina Expedition there is a dual emphasis: the implicit political objectives and the explicit objective of map-making. Making marine charts or hydrography was identified by Malaspina in his original proposal as a scientific activity, consistent with the other scientific missions of the voyage which concentrate on the 18th century enlightenment 'scientificism' of collection, classification, cataloguing and systemization of knowledge (collection illustrations typical of the expedition can be seen in figures 2.9 and 5.2).

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[6] Warren Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 306.

[7] Malaspina 'commandeered' ships and men in San Blas and split off several of his officers into a sub-expedition to survey the inland waterways of what later was revealed as an Island (modern Vancouver Island). The activities of the Mexicana and Sutil are examined in Donald Cutter, *Malaspina & Galiano: Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast 1791 & 1792* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991); Drury's thesis contextualizes the entire era but specifically focuses on the Spanish activities in the "Salish Sea" in the two years before Galiano and Valdes arrived, see Devon Drury, "That Immense and Dangerous Sea': Spanish Imperial Policy and Power During the Exploration of the Salish Sea, 1790-1791." (University of Victoria, 2010).

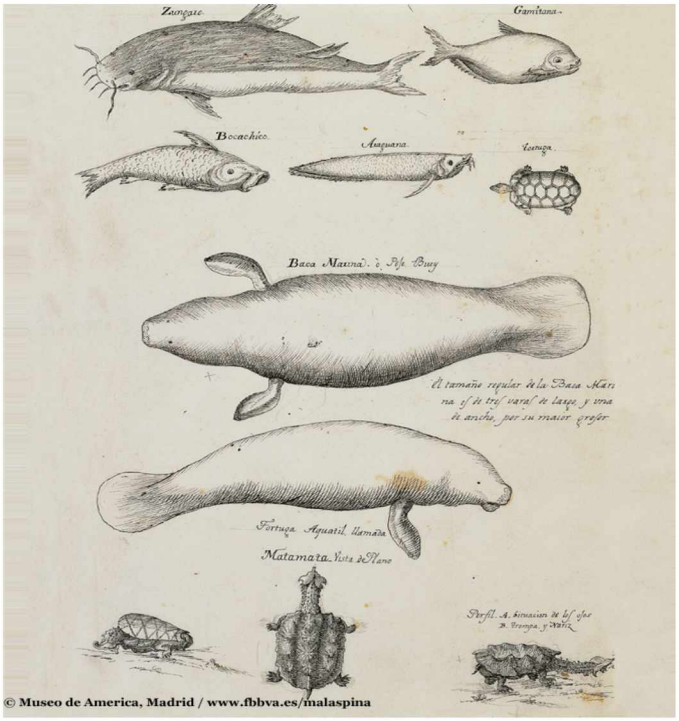

Figure 5.2. Specimen drawing produced by the Expedition's naturalists. Source: Museo de America, Madrid.

In recent years there has been profound debate among scholars regarding the history of cartography in the early-modern period. Clearly, maps have always been powerful tools for elites to disseminate or restrict information (or as the case may be disinformation), but maps also stood as a symbolization of power and a mechanism for the pursuit or acquisition of both power and knowledge.[8] The pursuit of power through

[8] In *Foucaultian* terms knowledge and power become equivalent, J B Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 26, no. 2 (October 1, 1989), 1; B. Craib, "Cartography and power in the conquest and creation of new Spain," *Review Literature And Arts Of The Americas* 35, no. 1 (2010), 7; Jeremy Black, "Government, State, and Cartography: Mapping, Power, and Politics in Europe, 1650–1800," *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 43, no. 2 (January 1, 2008): 95.

cartographic knowledge has a special history on the Northwest Coast that predates the English-Spanish contest of 1778-1792.[9]

After the European "discovery" of the Pacific Ocean, cartographic representations of both the North Pacific and the respective limits of both Asia and America long remained a puzzle. Early maps of the region portrayed America lying at a considerable distance from Asia. Subsequent maps showed America joined with Asia, but again transformed in even later versions where the continents are shown as separated by a narrow strait[10]. The mystery of the physical geography of Pacific Northwest persisted for almost 200 years. The Parisian cartography house of *Delisle* had a long and somewhat checkered association with the cartography of North America.

When Peter the Great founded a chancery of Military-Marine (later to be the Admiralty College and then the Hydrology Department) and an Academy of Science for compiling results of the new Russian explorations, Joseph Nicolas Delisle (son of Claude Delisle and brother of Guillaume Delisle) was invited to St. Petersburg in 1726.[11] Delisle worked at the Russian Academy of Science for 21 years and retired in 1747, then returning to Paris. On his return to Paris, Delisle, together with Phillipe Bauche published maps based on information and materials that Delisle had illegally spirited out of Russia

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[9] The years 1778-1792 corresponding to the Cook third voyage to the Pacific, arriving on the Northwest Coast in 1778 and the Nootka negotiations of Vancouver and Quadra in 1792.

[10] L. Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific," *Imago Mundi* 3, no. 1 (1939): 88.There is little evidence of any contemporary information from additional expeditions to support any of these versions.

[11] L. Breitfuss, "Early Maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the Lands around the North Pacific. Controversy between G.F. Muller and N. Delisle." *Imago Mundi*, volume 3, (1939), 89.

(where, similar to Spain and Portugal strict secrecy laws applied to state cartography).[12] One of the Delisle maps, published in Paris in 1752 titled *Carte Generales des decouvertes a la Mer du Sud* combined Russian information from contemporary explorations with fantasies and fabrications favored by Guillaume Delisle, including the "discoveries" of Admiral De Fonte and others to fill the blank space west of Hudson Bay (the original Delisle map in figure 4.2 enjoyed several iterations, one is shown in figure 5.3).[13]

Figure 5.3. 1772 map (after Delisle) of the North Pacific including *"Northwest Passages"* of *Fonte* and *De Fuca*. Source: Wagner, Henry R. *The Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America to the year 1800, Volume I.*

[12] There is debate over the degree of Portuguese censorship of cartography, see Bailey W. Diffie, "Foreigners in Portugal and the 'Policy of Silence," *Terrae incognitae* 1 (1969). 23-34; Armando Cortesao, *History of Portuguese Cartography v.2* (Coimbra: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1969), 116-118

[13] Breitfuss, "Early maps of North-Eastern Asia and of the lands around the North Pacific.", 92. Admiral De Fonte like Maldonado is a figure shrouded in mystery with a claim to a Northwest Passage, the 1752 Delisle map is seen in figure 3 of chapter 4 of this thesis.

The maps of 1750 and 1752 were made by Delisle with the same Phillipe Neuville de Bauche who would almost 40 years later present his memoir of the *Maldonado Relatioñ* to the Academy of Science in Paris shortly after Malaspina's departure.

The string of speculative map versions of the North Pacific created by the Delisles demonstrated a pattern of production that is in part addressed by scholarship focusing on the relationships of power and cartography.[14] J.B. Harley points out that in the search for alternative ways of "understanding maps" we need to discard the premise that map makers were unquestionably dedicated to scientific or objective knowledge creation.[15] Information for elites such as Neuville de Bauche and J. N. Delisle created power (if in no other sense than the monetary rewards of publishing appropriated information from former employers). However, state - organized mapping projects such as the voyages of Cook, LePerouse, Malaspina and Vancouver raise fundamental questions regarding the role of cartography in the Imperial project.

The claiming rituals that had long served Spain as a process for legitimizing sovereignty were discounted by Malaspina in his own writing where he suggested that the English practice of purchasing claim from the native inhabitants was in the long run a far more pragmatic course.[16] The *Scientific and Political voyage around the world* was, however an expedition made by the royal Spanish navy commanded and crewed by

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[14] Harley, "Deconstructing the Map.", 3.

[15] Ibid., 1.

[16] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 317.

military men collecting (and many modern cartographic historians would insist: creating) knowledge for the benefit and extension of a Spanish Empire. Despite Malaspina's liberal voiced dialogue recorded in the words of his journal and correspondence, he and the expedition served a higher authority. It became visible first in Callao in July of 1790 and it became indelibly clear in Mexico City in March 1791 when he received orders from his king to re-task the expedition to search for an imperial strategic objective (the apocryphal strait of Anian described in Maldonado's *relatión*) once the entire Spanish geopolitical *schwerpunkt* had shifted to the waters off the North Coast of America in the midst of the Nootka Crisis (the Spanish station at Nootka is illustrated by Malaspina expedition artists in figure IV).[17]

Both Malaspina and Bustamante were combat experienced naval commanders. It cannot be entirely discounted that the diversion of the expedition to the Northwest Coast might have been tactically motivated by Spanish naval ministry to achieve parity with a retaliatory English expedition whose planning has been documented.[18] The timing of Malaspina's orders for redirection, however, raise more questions. The royal orders are signed by Minister of the Marine Valdez on December 22, 1790, which was 60 days after the English and Spanish had arrived at terms for avoiding war.[19] The first Nootka

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[17] *Schwerepunkt* is a term from German military science that literally is translated as "heavy point" meaning the point of focus, particularly operationally.

[18] Rene Chartrand, "Malaspina and the Spanish Explorations: A Contribution to the Geostrategic History of Canada's West Coast," in *Malaspina' 92: Jornadas Internacionales Cadiz-1994*, ed. Mercedes Palau Baquero and Antonio Orozco Acuaviva (Cadiz: Real Academia Hispano-Americana, 1994), 413.

[19] George Verne Blue, "Anglo-French Diplomacy during the Critical Period of the Nootka Controversy , 1790," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1938): 176. On October 23rd 1790 Floridablanca and English Ambassador Fitzhebert reached agreement.

Convention of 1790, while intentionally vague, outlined a procedure for reaching formal settlement of the competing claims to the area, and was signed by Spain and England on October 28.[20] Once it became clear that France would not and could not support Spain in a war with England, Pitt's Spanish counterpart Floridablanca (who all through the crisis had been highly antagonistic toward the French) went so far as to propose an alliance with England.[21]

Figure 5.4. The Spanish station at Nootka as depicted by one of the Malaspina Expedition's Artists. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

It is unlikely in view of the circumstances that Spain was redeploying Malaspina for a potential combat mission, which might have been signaled by some change in the

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[20] In fact once the representatives of Spain and England met at Nootka (Vancouver and Quadra) in 1792, the instructions to each prevented any practical progress and they parted without a settlement, seeking further instructions from their respective governments.

[21] Howard V. Evans, "The Nootka Sound Controversy in Anglo-French Diplomacy--1790," *The Journal of Modern History* 46, no. 4 (January 1974): 609, Spain it must be remembered, shared a long and difficult to defend frontier with France, the events in France with regards to the Royal family were an anathema to Spain's government.

crew and cargo (more marines and munitions) when resupplying in San Blas.[22] It is more likely that Malaspina's squadron was in effect, being deployed in a far more sophisticated and modern way; the Malaspina Expedition was in essence, a team of highly technical and trained observers that could be directed half-a-world away to perform strategic reconnaissance in a region that potentially could contain a valuable bargaining chip in what promised to be difficult future diplomacy.[23]

Malaspina wrote that Spain could scarcely defend its claims to anything north of Cape Blanco.[24] Yet it can be argued that Malaspina's mission to the Northwest Coast and the production of the expedition (in terms of maps and knowledge) signaled the beginning of European imperialism in this portion of the Americas. Much in the way that 100 years later the major powers of Europe would meet in a room in Berlin to decide the Imperial division of Africa, England and Spain in 1790 had 'gamed' each other into a position of diplomatic accommodation where the real America, the biota, the kelp, the sea otters, the human beings, every grain of soil and every stick of wood had been reduced to a set of geodetically referenced, two-dimensional depictions on which more lines could be drawn in ink to identify the European owners. To play the "game" Spain (like France

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[22] Chartrand, "Malaspina and the Spanish Explorations: A Contribution to the Geostrategic History of Canada's West Coast." 325-326. There was, however, a chronic shortage of both arms and men who could use them at San Blas, and even without re-outfitting, the two corvettes remained relatively potent warships when compared to Vancouver's ships, but Spain clearly had no taste for war with England at this point.

[23] Cook, *Floodtide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, 363-365. When England's emissary to the Nootka negotiations-George Vancouver arrived he had every intention of claiming for England everything north of San Francisco Bay, largely based on the ancient claims of Francis Drake.

[24] Ibid., 317. *Cabo Blanco* was a prominent headland south of modern day Humboldt Bay in northern California.

and every other state with pretentions of dominion or even survival) required maps the equal of its adversaries. In this respect Spain had succeeded technically, thanks in no small part to the sincere efforts of the 18th century Spanish hydrography corps, including figures like Vincente Tofino, Felipe Bauza, Alcala Galliano, Manuel Quimper and last but not least Alessandro Malaspina.[25]

Where current critical cartography arguments encounter difficulty in parsing the map making of European states is most particularly evident with reference to Spain's cartographic practices. J. B. Harley writes "and world maps, though increasingly drawn on mathematically defined projections, nevertheless gave a spiraling twist to the manifest destiny of European overseas conquest and colonization."[26] Harley's essay attempts to define the mechanism of and the underlying social purpose to maps that he insists are textual hegemonic tools. Denis Wood has written that the State and map making are reciprocally constitutive in that "the state, in its pre-modern and modern forms, evolves together with the map as an instrument of polity, to assess taxes, wage war, facilitate communications and exploit strategic resources".[27] However, in the case of Spain it is very difficult to understand how cartography could have been an agent of cultural transformation, or, indeed what impact maps could have had outside of the small circle of elites that they seem to have been intended for. Ricardo Padron argues that despite the

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[25] Wagner finds the Spanish cartography of Malaspina period equal and in many cases superior technically to the English: Henry R. Wagner, *The Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America to the year 1800, Volume I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1937), 252.

[26] J. B. Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 26, no. 2 (October 1, 1989): 6.

[27] Denis Wood, *The Power of Maps* (New York: Guilford, 1992), 43.

"fervent efforts" of Early Modern Spanish monarchs to map their domains, Spanish maps were: "rare artifacts, found primarily in certain social and institutional circles—among navigators, for example ---where their use was indispensable. Without affordable, readily available printed maps to support the development of cartographic literacy, it is hard to imagine how a revolution in spatiality passed on scientific mapping could be generalized."[28] Owing to Spain's entrenched culture of secrecy regarding its state maps, the Spanish public had very little exposure to printed maps of any kind, and if the production of Spain's state maps was reserved for the use of a limited circle of privileged elites, it raises the question of what (or whose) purpose it might serve if the information in those maps was intentionally manipulated.

We know today that European empires did succeed, and that that success was usually at the expense of a competing empire or polity. An examination of modern Alaska place names serves as a useful record of some of those Empires and it is difficult not to notice that the majority of the place names are of English origin. One of the pioneers of the discipline of Cartographic History, Arthur Robinson wrote: "there are few results of man's activities that so closely parallel man's interests and intellectual capabilities as the map." The Spanish and English maps of the Northwest Coast reflect both an intellectual

[28] Ricardo Padrón, "Mapping Plus Ultra: Cartography, Space, and Hispanic Modernity," *Representations* 79, no. 1 (August 2002): 32.

and geopolitical contest, one in which (as reflected in maps) the English clearly prevailed.[29]

III. The Road to Corruna

Alessandro Malaspina remains a paradoxical figure. His loyalty to an absolutist monarch seems today in almost diametric opposition to his personal philosophy, based as it was on many of the great ideas of the Enlightenment. Kendrick and others have placed Malaspina into a sympathetic role of a somewhat naïve reform-minded servant of an enlightened-absolutist monarchy. Despite his critique of the Spanish Empire, Malaspina earnestly sought the ear of his monarch, Malaspina seemed convinced that given the opportunity he could serve his king best by being the agent of colonial reform that would consolidate Spain's greatness and future development. Such noble intentions are difficult to criticize.

The trouble for Malaspina began with his reluctance to submit raw data on his political investigations (after several pointed requests to do so) rather than his reform-based thesis and political axioms.[30] Kendrick notes that there was an air of obstinacy in Malaspina that finally met its match in the equally ambitious but dangerously ruthless Manuel de Godoy. Only months after the return of the expedition to Spain, Malaspina

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[29] Arthur H. Robinson, "The potential contribution of cartography in liberal education.," *Cartographer* 2, no. 1 (1965): 1-8.

[30] John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 124-127.

was drawn into a conspiracy to displace Charles IV's Prime Minister Manuel de Godoy (generally recognized as one of the Queen's romantic interests).[31] Secret messages to the queen from Malaspina were intercepted and his fate was sealed. On the 22nd of November 1795 the order was issued for the arrest of Brigadier of the royal navy Don Alexandro Malaspina. Conviction was a foregone conclusion in a state trial of treason at this high a level when the object of the conspiracy was the second most powerful man in Spain (and some would argue that Godoy was the most powerful). Malaspina was sentenced to life imprisonment and was conveyed to the fortress of San Anton (figure 5.5) in the bay of Corruna, Spain in April of 1796.[32]

Following Malaspina's arrest the archives of the expedition became scattered or suppressed. The intended publication of the 8 volume opus of the voyage was never to be, and Malaspina's journal of the voyage would remain unpublished in Spain until the 1895 *Novo y Colson* version.[33] The only portions of the expedition that did see the light of day before *Novo y Colson* were the maps. Spanish maritime atlases published after the turn of the 19th century incorporate many of the maps made by the Malaspina expedition (with Malaspina's name or any reference to him carefully redacted) and many more appear in French copies appropriated after the annexation of Spain by Napoleon. It would also be Napoleon, at the pleading of Malaspina's Italian supporters, who would finally

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[31] There remains disagreement as to the circumstances, there have been claims of an intimate liaison between Malaspina and the Queen and that this relationship was being exploited by Godoy's enemies.

[32] John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 141-142.

[33] A version of the Malaspina journal was translated and published in Russian by the great Russian-Estonian mariner Adam Johann Ritter von Krusenstern in 1823.

have the mariner released from the prison of San Anton in 1803, although the influence of Godoy was still significant enough to have Malaspina banished from Spanish soil in perpetuity.

Figure 5.5. The fortress of San Anton in the bay of Corruna, Malaspina's prison for 8 years. Source: Museo Naval, Madrid.

After his release Malaspina returned to the Parma region of his birth and engaged for some years in the wine trade. Manfredi records with some poignancy that in 1806 with a downturn in business Malaspina was forced to sell his personal sextant. After a long illness Malaspina died nearly anonymously in 1810.

Malaspina wrote a great deal during his imprisonment, he translated some works, wrote a long philosophical essay and managed to correspond with supporters on the outside in many letters. A passage in one letter written in 1798 to his most frequent correspondent Don Greppi reveals a degree of self awareness:

> In my solitary meditations, I have wanted to write some account of the need for distant ocean voyages for the education of the public man. The practice of

> navigation forms the most solid base of the excellent durability of the English system. At sea man sees daily how nature makes his conjectures vanish; in the tempests and perils he sees himself thrown on his own resources; his skill and steadfastness are his only weapons; there are neither orders, relatives, communications, nor political acknowledgement.[34]

Malaspina was never short of vision, but at times in his meteoric career the vision would cross the border into perilous projections. With the isolation and burden of command and long sea duty, the very voyages intended to disenchant a Spanish political imaginary, and to find, in naval terms, the course for Spain's future would actually take him further from Spain than he ever anticipated, and in the end Malaspina and his visions were lost at sea.

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[34] John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 146.

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